

# Attractions

MAGAZINE

Spring 2018  
Volume 11, Issue 2 • \$6.99

**What You May  
Not Know About  
Walt Disney**

**Updates  
From Above,  
Star Wars, Toy Story,  
Harry Potter & More**

**Top 10 Date Destinations  
at Walt Disney World**

**Q&A with Universal's  
Senior Director of Entertainment**

**Andretti Indoor  
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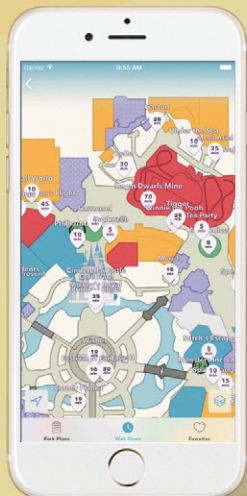
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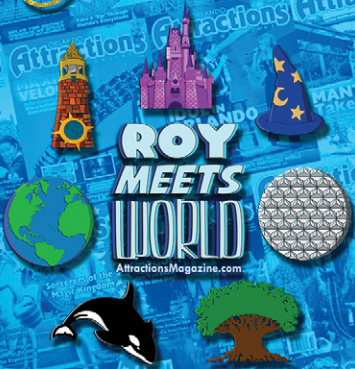
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Walt Disney stands in the middle of the Magic Kingdom, hand-in-hand with his most famous character, Mickey Mouse. This statue appears at a few different Disney properties and is known as "Partners". Photo by Tharin White.

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# WHAT'S NEW ON ATTRACTIONSMAGAZINE.com

By Banks Lee

Check our website regularly for more articles, plus many videos. Stay up-to-date with all the latest theme park and attraction news through our weekly videos and shows, our free iPhone/iPad app and our free e-mail newsletter.

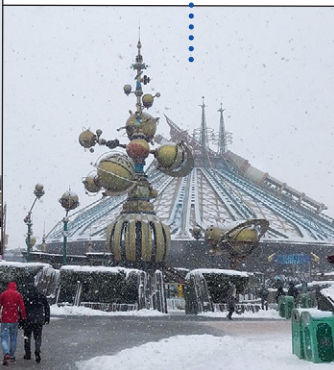
## QUEEN ELSA COATS DISNEYLAND PARIS IN SNOW



PHOTOS BY BJÖRN DIEBETZ

Disneyland Paris recently found itself in "deep, deep, deep, deep snow." The park was entirely blanketed, creating a winter

wonderland not many people get the chance to experience at a Disney park. Head to AttractionsMagazine.com for photos and videos, including a chilly ride aboard Big Thunder Mountain Railroad in the snow.



## TEN INSIDER TIPS FOR SAILING THE DISNEY DREAM



Sailing aboard the Disney Dream for the first time? Head to our YouTube channel for a video of our Top Ten Insider Tips to make the most out of your vacation. Have a tip of your own? Email them to us at [info@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:info@attractionsmagazine.com) and you may be featured!



## INTERVIEW WITH PAUL FROMMER, CREATOR OF THE NA'VI LANGUAGE



We recently had the chance to sit down with the individual who worked with James Cameron to create the Na'vi language for the Avatar movies. You

can find our full interview with Dr. Paul Frommer on our YouTube channel. You might even learn a thing or two for your next visit to Pandora: The World of Avatar.



## THE ATTRACTIONS SHOW UPDATES/ THE WEEKLY REWIND RETURNS

We've recently made some changes to our long-running weekly Attractions Show. In addition to a name change from "Attractions Magazine - The Show" to "The Attractions Show" and some graphics updates, Banks Lee has stepped down as co-host, with Quinn Roseboom taking his place. But you can still see Banks each week on his own show. He will be joining you live for a revamped version of "The Weekly Rewind". You can chat with him every Sunday at [Facebook.com/AttractionsMagazine](https://www.facebook.com/AttractionsMagazine).



## LIVE FROM THE PARKS

Follow us on Twitter @Attractions, on Snapchat at AttractionsMag, on Instagram at attractionsmagazine and our Facebook page at [facebook.com/attractionsmagazine](https://www.facebook.com/attractionsmagazine). We frequently post on-the-spot information, photos and live videos while we're inside the theme parks. You can also see our latest videos if you subscribe to our YouTube channel at [youtube.com/attractionsmagazine](https://www.youtube.com/attractionsmagazine). Be sure to click on the bell icon to be notified when we post new videos.

### We post new videos every day:

As Dreamers Do  
Attractions Adventures  
The Attractions Show  
Blue Sky Beauty  
Daycation Kingdom  
Early Night Live  
Expansion Drive  
Photo Finds  
Roy Meets World  
The Weekly Rewind



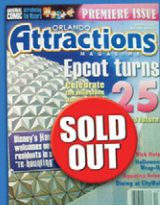


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Vol. 1, Issue 6



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Summer 2009



Fall 2009



Winter 2009-10



Spring 2010



Summer 2010



Fall 2010



Winter 2010-11



Spring 2011



Summer 2011



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Spring 2012



Summer 2012



Fall 2012



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Fall 2013



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Spring 2014



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Spring 2015



Summer 2015



Fall 2015



Winter 2015-16



Spring 2016



Summer 2016



Fall 2016



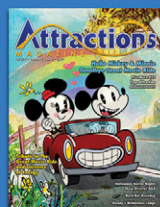
Winter 2016-17



Spring 2017



Summer 2017



Fall 2017



Winter 2017-18





# FEEDBACK

Favorite Fan Photos and Stories.



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Here I am meeting Nick at Magic Kingdom. I was wearing a Zootopia T-shirt, and he saw me from the float. I yelled his infamous; "Pawpsicles!, Get your pawpsicles!" line. He got very excited. As soon as the float stopped, he got off and came straight to me, gave me a massive hug and took this picture with me.  
— Rory Melly



Our 9-year-old autistic son meeting Ariel. She was absolutely amazing with him. They had a chat for about 20 minutes. As we walked away, she said to her cast member helper, "Well that lovely young man just made my day!" In fact that comment made my holiday.  
— Sarah Willis



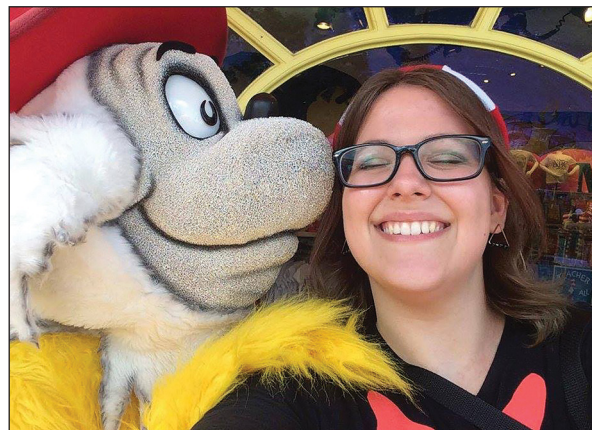
Meeting Tigger at The Crystal Palace.  
— Samantha MacGregor



It helps when you work at a theme park and can get your friends in free. Here are my friends and I hanging with Santa Cookie at Sesame Place in Pennsylvania.  
— Ray Harrison



This was at the end of one of our vacations. It was the perfect end for a wonderful family vacation. I love them so much.  
— Marcela Vargas



Sam-I-Am is one of my favorite Dr. Seuss characters, and without even knowing this, he gave me a big ol' kiss to the cheek!  
— Nicole Love Howarth





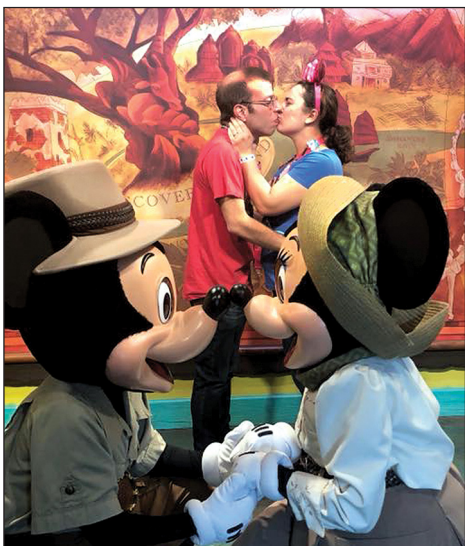
My daughters favorite Disney film is "The Lion King" and one of her favourite characters is Rafiki. They were lucky to meet each other on her birthday. — Sue Foster



Captain America is my son's favorite. This was our first visit to Universal's Islands of Adventure and it was priceless. — Liliana Granger



Matt's very first vacation and his very first interaction with a character. — Kim Grey



My girlfriend and I's first trip to Animal Kingdom. — Josh Byrne



This is a selfie of me with Dr. Emmett Brown at Universal Orlando Resort in 2015. I love the Back to the Future films, so I love this photo. — Lisa Starke



My hubby and I were excited to see Olaf. Before this picture was taken, Olaf had to go and get cooled off, but as we were waiting for him to come back, he peeked around the corner and caught us off guard. I wish I had that shot. We were surprised. LOL — Kathy Barr



Just Goof'n' around at Epcot. — Sarah Heckman Tittlebaum

## WRITE TO US!

.....

We want your letters and photos!

If you have any comments about the magazine, questions about traveling to Orlando or fun stories or photos to share, simply e-mail us at [info@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:info@attractionsmagazine.com).





# THEN & NOW

The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh

By Matt Roseboom

**T**he Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh ride in the Magic Kingdom opened in June 1999, taking the place of Mr. Toad's Wild Ride. In 2010, as one of the first parts of the New Fantasyland expansion (then being called Fantasyland Forest), Pooh's Playful Spot playground, across from the ride, closed and Disney moved the 120-ton tree to the ride's entrance. The tree (which has a hidden Nautilus inside, as a nod to where it originally was, above the old 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea ride) wasn't the only thing changed at the attraction. The queue and exterior facade were completely re-imagined, adding an interactive queue, and the name of the gift shop at the exit changed from Pooh's Thottful Shop to Hundred Acre Goods. One of the new interactive areas called Tigger's Bouncy Place was only open a short time before it was changed to a meet and greet with the Winnie the Pooh characters. It's assumed the bouncing spots were a safety risk. You can also see in the concept art, they originally planned for more than one tree.

**THEN**

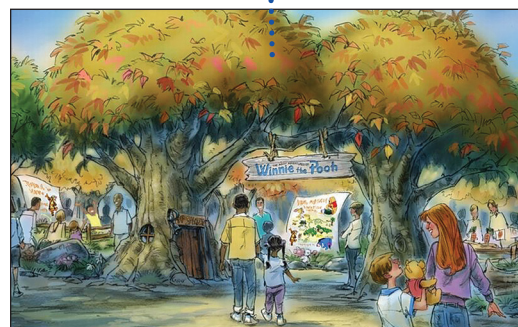


PHOTO BY DISNEY

**NOW**



PHOTO BY THARIN WHITE





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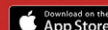
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# VACATION PLANNER

Upcoming Orlando-area attractions and events you may want to plan your vacation around.

By Banks Lee

## THE GREAT LEGO RACE VR COASTER



**Location:** Legoland Florida, formerly Project X roller coaster

**Opening Date:** March 23

The Great Lego Race is the first virtual reality (VR) roller coaster experience designed for kids and represents the first time the Lego brand and minifigure characters have been integrated with VR technology in a theme park attraction.

## STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS MINILAND DISPLAY

**Location:** Legoland Florida Resort

**Opening Date:** May 4

A new Lego Star Wars: The Force Awakens Miniland display will feature memorable moments from Episode VII of the Star Wars saga enhanced with lights, sound effects and animation.

## GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY INDOOR ROLLER COASTER

**Location:** Epcot, formerly Universe of Energy

**Opening Date:** By 2021

Based on the rockin', action-packed "Guardians of the Galaxy" movies, this one-of-a-kind family attraction will feature a brand-new, innovative ride system — and will be one of the longest enclosed roller coasters in the world.

## RATATOUILLE: A RECIPE FOR ADVENTURE



**Location:** Epcot, France Pavilion

**Opening Date:** By 2021

Within World Showcase, in an all-new space, a new Ratatouille-inspired attraction will take guests on a chase across a kitchen with the sights, sounds and smells of Gusteau's Parisian restaurant.

## FAST & FURIOUS: SUPERCHARGED

**Location:** Universal Studios Florida, formerly Disaster!

**Opening Date:** Spring

Guests will have the opportunity to actually live the Fast & Furious excitement they've seen on the big screen in a high-octane ride experience.



## INFINITY FALLS

**Location:** SeaWorld Orlando, formerly SEAGarden area

**Opening Date:** Summer

Infinity Falls will be a new rapids ride that will send each raft twisting and turning through a jungle environment as guests experience the rapids. A unique vertical elevator will lift each raft for a dramatic launch into the river, 40 feet below, making it the world's tallest river rapid drop.



PHOTO BY JACQUE ROSEBOOM

## MICKY AND MINNIE'S RUNAWAY RAILWAY

**Location:** Disney's Hollywood Studios, formerly The Great Movie Ride

**Opening Date:** 2019

Mickey & Minnie's Runaway Railway will feature a new original story and theme song, as it takes guests on a journey inside the wacky and unpredictable world of Mickey Mouse cartoon shorts. New technologies will transform the two-dimensional cartoon world into an incredible multi-dimensional experience.



## UNTITLED HARRY POTTER ROLLER COASTER

**Location:** Islands of Adventure, formerly Dragon Challenge

**Opening Date:** 2019

Details on the new attraction are scarce, but this all-new thrill ride will take you deeper into J.K. Rowling's Wizarding World and will be unlike anything Universal has done before.

## DISNEY SKYLINER

**Location:** Walt Disney World

**Opening Date:** Unknown

This new transportation system will give guests a bird's-eye view of Walt Disney World Resort. Disney Skyliner will connect Epcot and Disney's Hollywood Studios to Disney's Art of Animation Resort, Disney's Pop Century Resort and Disney's Caribbean Beach Resort, as well as the proposed 15th Disney Vacation Club property, Disney Riviera Resort.





## SUPER NINTENDO WORLD

**Location:** Universal Orlando Resort, location unknown

**Opening Date:** Unknown

Universal Parks & Resorts will bring the fun of Nintendo games to life with expansive, highly themed environments to Universal Studios Japan, Universal Orlando and Universal Studios Hollywood. Guests will feel as if they are playing inside their favorite Nintendo games.

## UPDATED CHINA FILM

**Location:** Epcot, China Pavilion

**Opening Date:** Unknown

To showcase the splendor and majesty of China, an updated film will be added using a next-generation digital camera system to film a brand new, seamless Circle-Vision 360° show.

## TRON LIGHTCYCLE POWER COASTER



**Location:** Magic Kingdom, formerly unused land next to Space Mountain

**Opening Date:** By 2021

The highest rated attraction at Shanghai Disneyland is coming to Tomorrowland in a new area near Space Mountain.

## NEW LIVE ENTERTAINMENT THEATER

**Location:** Magic Kingdom, off of Main Street U.S.A.

**Opening Date:** Unknown

Based on the iconic Willis Theater in the 1920s Kansas City where Walt lived after he left Marceline, this new addition to Magic Kingdom will be located off of Main Street U.S.A. and will be an entirely new venue for world class entertainment.

## SPACE-THEMED RESTAURANT

**Location:** Epcot, next to Mission: Space

**Opening Date:** Unknown

Adjacent to Mission: Space, a new table-service restaurant will invite guests to travel high above the Earth for an unforgettable dining experience.



## SESAME STREET LAND

**Location:** SeaWorld Orlando, to replace Shamu's Happy Harbor (still open)

**Opening Date:** Fall 2022

As part of the continued partnership between SeaWorld Entertainment and Sesame Workshop, a new Sesame Street-themed land will be built.

## STAR WARS: GALAXY'S EDGE

**Location:** Disney's Hollywood Studios, formerly Streets of America and Lights, Motors, Action!

**Opening Date:** 2019

The totally immersive land will include two jaw-dropping attractions that allow guests to have control of their experiences. One attraction will put guests in the middle of a battle between the First Order and the Resistance—inside a Star Destroyer. In the second attraction, guests will have the chance to fly the Millennium Falcon—the most famous ship in the galaxy. Throughout the land, guests will also have the chance to interact with Chewie, the lovable BB-8 and members of the First Order, plus wander through a toy shop in the street market run by a Toydarian, one of the creatures from Star Wars: The Phantom Menace.

## STAR WARS-THEMED IMMERSIVE HOTEL



**Location:** Next to Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge at Disney's Hollywood Studios

**Opening Date:** Unknown

Fans can live out their Star Wars adventures beyond the theme parks with an immersive experience at a groundbreaking new Star Wars-themed hotel concept. The new experience will take guests to a galaxy far, far away and will be seamlessly connected to Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge.

## TOY STORY LAND

**Location:** Disney's Hollywood Studios, formerly Backlot Tour

**Opening Date:** June 30

Across eleven acres, Toy Story Land will include two all-new attractions and one expanded favorite. Guests will whoosh along on a family-friendly roller coaster behind Slinky Dog, take a spin with flying saucers in toy spaceships and score high on the midway.



## EVENTS

### Seven Seas Food Festival

SeaWorld Orlando

Saturdays and Sundays through April 15

### International Flower & Garden Festival

Epcot

Now through May 28

### Food & Wine Festival

Busch Gardens Tampa

Saturdays and Sundays through April 29

### Spooky Empire

Wyndham Orlando Resort

April 6 through 8

### Just for Kids

SeaWorld Orlando

Weekends April 21 through May 13

### Sesame Street Kids' Weekends

Busch Gardens Tampa

Saturdays and Sundays May 5 through 20

### Lego Star Wars Days

Legoland Florida Resort

Saturdays and Sundays May 5 through 20

### MegaCon

Orange County Convention Center

May 24 through 27

### Jack Hanna Weekend

Busch Gardens Tampa

Saturday and Sunday May 26 and 27

### Kidz Bop Weekend

Legoland Florida Resort

Date TBD

All events and dates are subject to change. Please check with the proper organization before attending. Check our calendar section at [AttractionsMagazine.com](http://AttractionsMagazine.com) for up-to-date happenings in the Orlando area.





# NEWS IN THE QUEUE

By Quinn Roseboom

## TEMPORARILY IN THE CORNER

LOCATION: Disney Springs



Only open for a limited time, a new store has opened called “The Disney Corner.” The two-story store is full of princess and Minnie Mouse merchandise and is marketed towards princesses of all ages. The merchandise comes from World of Disney while it’s being remodeled. Portions of World of Disney will stay open during the remodel. The World of Disney store at Downtown Disney in Anaheim is also being remodeled.

## AUTHENTIC FLORIDA EXPERIENCE

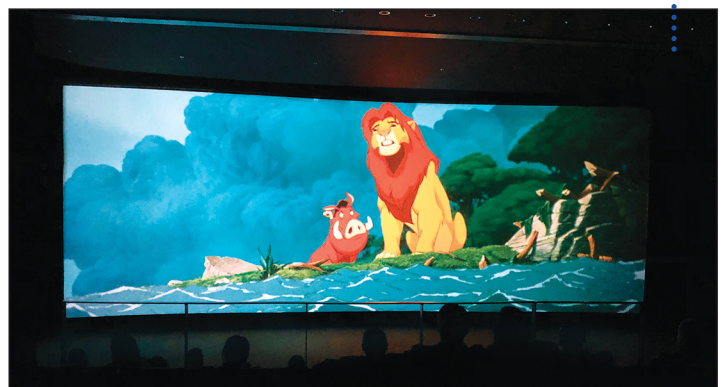
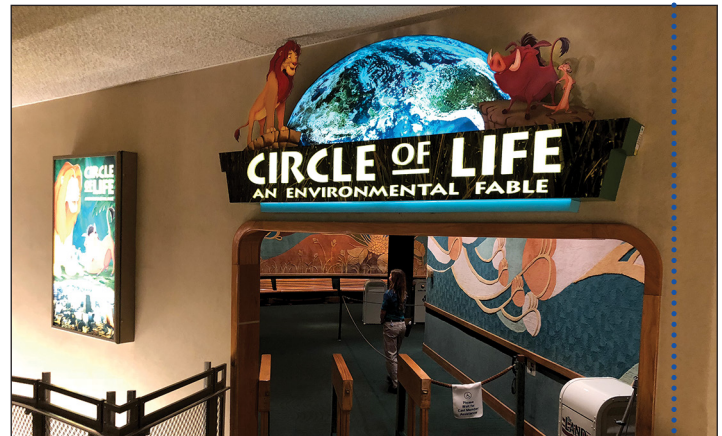
LOCATION: Gatorland



The brand new Stompin’ Gator Off-Road Adventure ride opened in December. The ride takes guests into the swamps behind the park on the back of a monster truck on an adventure full of twists and turns, as the comedic plot plays out. The cost is \$10 per person, in addition to park admission.

## THE CIRCLE OF LIFE ENDS

LOCATION: Epcot



The Circle of Life, an environmental fable edutainment film in the Land pavilion, had its final showing after over two decades. The theater has been converted into a home for Disney Performing Arts student workshops and performances.



## CLASSIC ATTRACTION TRUMPED

LOCATION: Magic Kingdom

The Hall of Presidents has reopened after almost a year of refurbishment and has continued the tradition of adding the newest U.S. President to the show. Other changes include updated sound and visuals, and a new narrator.



## DINING WITH DOLPHINS

LOCATION: Discovery Cove

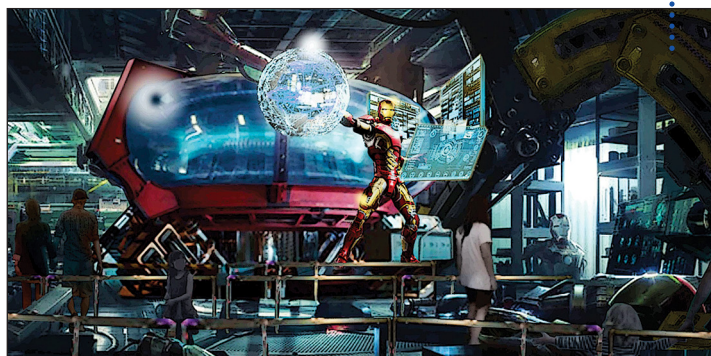


PHOTOS BY THARIN WHITE

Paradise Nights is a brand new dinner and dolphin encounter experience. This two hour experience invites guests into the park after hours for full course family-style meals, unlimited drinks and multiple animal encounters, including one with the park's dolphins, but don't worry, you won't need to bring swimwear as you won't be getting in the water. Day admission is not included or needed.

## WALK THIS WAY TO A NEW AVENGERS FACILITY

LOCATION: Disneyland Paris



Guests will soon see a reimagining of the Rock 'n' Roller Coaster starring Aerosmith at Walt Disney Studios Park as a high-speed, hyper-kinetic adventure with Iron Man and the Avengers. Captain America, Spider-Man, Star-Lord and Black Widow will be available to meet at the park when Marvel Summer of Super Heroes begins this June.

## REP' YOUR HOUSE PRIDE

LOCATION: Islands of Adventure



PHOTO BY BRITANNI TUTTLE

"The Nighttime Lights at Hogwarts Castle," a castle projection show that has been at Universal Studios Hollywood for some time, has finally made its way to the original Wizarding World of Harry Potter. The show is narrated by the school's Sorting Hat and celebrates the four houses which Hogwarts students get sorted into.



## SUMMER OF SUPERS

LOCATION: Walt Disney World

This summer is going to be an “Incredible” one at the Disney parks as super heroes come out to play. Tomorrowland will be taken over for a dance party with Mr. Incredible, Elastigirl, Edna Mode and Frozone from Disney/Pixar’s “Incredibles 2”. The super heroes will interact with guests throughout the land, and the festivities culminate with a dance party on the Rocket Tower Stage. In the America Gardens Theatre at Epcot, Star-Lord and Gamora from the Guardians of the Galaxy will join an alien band, taking guests on a “journey through the cosmos.”



## KIDS ROOMS TO DISAPPEAR

LOCATION: Walt Disney World



Children seeking a few hours escape from their parents (and vice versa) will soon have fewer options during their Disney vacation, because the three resort hotel Children’s Activity Centers will permanently close after July this year. In-room babysitting services will still be available (starting at \$18 per hour for one child). In addition, the Walt Disney World Dolphin Hotel (which is not owned and operated by Disney) says it currently has no plans to discontinue its children’s activity center.

## THE ARENA

LOCATION: ESPN Wide World of Sports



As part of the 20th anniversary celebration of the complex, Walt Disney World has officially opened a new multi-purpose sports and entertainment arena. The 8,000-seat arena will host a variety of major indoor sporting events from basketball, volleyball, gymnastics, wrestling and more. The venue also will host Health & Fitness Expos during runDisney race weekends.

PHOTOS BY BANKS LEE



## CIRQUE DU MICKEY

### LOCATION:

Disney Springs

A new Cirque du Soleil show is in development through a collaboration with Disney Parks and Resorts. This new, original show will pay homage to Disney's animation history, with a story told in a way that can only be done by the performers of the famous theatrical group.



## NEW NIGHTTIME MYSTERY SHOW

### LOCATION: Universal Studios Orlando

Universal's Cinematic Spectacular is no more. After it was damaged during Hurricane Irma last year, the park announced a new nighttime lagoon show will take it to the next level. We don't know when it will begin or what it will be called yet, but it'll include new animation featuring characters from Universal attractions, and all new storyline, music, lighting and special effects.



## 4D KUNG FU

### LOCATION: Universal Studios Hollywood



Debating this summer, the all-new DreamWorks Theatre will be hosting the attraction, "Kung Fu Panda: The Emperor's Quest." Inspired by the "Kung Fu Panda" franchise, this attraction will take guests on a journey that combines storytelling with state-of-the-art visual effects for a 180-degree experience. The park has also opened a new Studio Store.

## I AM GROOT

### LOCATION: I am Groot (Translation: Epcot)



I am Groot. (Translation: The previously announced Guardians of the Galaxy attraction replacing Ellen's Energy Adventure has been confirmed to include an all-new innovative ride system, and will be one of the longest enclosed roller coasters in the world.)



## THE AMERICAN ADVENTURE CONTINUES

LOCATION: Epcot



The American Adventure at Epcot has periodically been updated over the past 35 years of operation to include some of the most important cultural and historic moments in the country's history. The show has a new digital projection system to give guests the highest-quality viewing experience, and the finale now includes notable figures who have helped shape America's more-recent history. The show's score also received an upgrade with all new orchestration.

## ISLAND ON THE GROUND

LOCATION: Legoland Florida



The classic rotating observation wheel attraction, Island in the Sky, has ended its 34 year run of entertaining guests, first debuting when the location was Cypress Gardens back in 1983. There is no word what will replace it.

## ADVENTURE IS UP THERE

LOCATION: Disney's Animal Kingdom



An all-new bird show featuring Dug and Russell from Disney/Pixar's "Up" is replacing the Flights of Wonder show. The Wilderness Explorers will discover species of birds from around the world on their new adventure in Anandapur Village. There will be up-close encounters each day with an array of winged creatures starting April 22.

## DARK DOUGHNUTS

LOCATION:  
Universal  
Orlando  
CityWalk

Voodoo Doughnuts is bringing their delicious fried delicacies to Orlando. The new shop will feature select originals, as well as one-of-a-kind pastries like the Bacon Maple Bar, Dirt Doughnut, Grape Ape and the iconic Voodoo Doll Doughnuts.





## EXCLUSIVE FASTPASS

LOCATION: Walt Disney World

Disney is testing a new limited pilot program that allows guests staying in the most exclusive rooms at certain resorts to optionally purchase additional FastPass+ attraction reservations. Three additional FastPass+ selections may be purchased per day for \$50 per guest. The three extra FastPasses may be booked 90 days before the final day of their visit, as opposed to the standard FastPass+ reservation window of 60 days (or 30 days for off-site guests).



## THE FOX AND THE MOUSE

LOCATION: Everywhere

The Walt Disney Company has announced they've reached a deal to acquire 21st Century Fox, including the Twentieth Century Fox Film and Television studios, along with cable and international TV businesses, for approximately \$52.4 billion in



stock. Combining with Disney are 21st Century Fox's film production businesses, including the homes of "Avatar," "X-Men," "Fantastic Four" and "Deadpool." They're also acquiring its television creative units, which have brought "The Americans," "This Is Us," "Modern Family," "The Simpsons" and many more hit television series to viewers. At the request of both 21st Century Fox and the Disney Board of Directors, Robert Iger has agreed to continue as chairman and chief executive officer of The Walt Disney Company through the end of calendar year 2021.

## SMALL WORLD GETTING LARGER

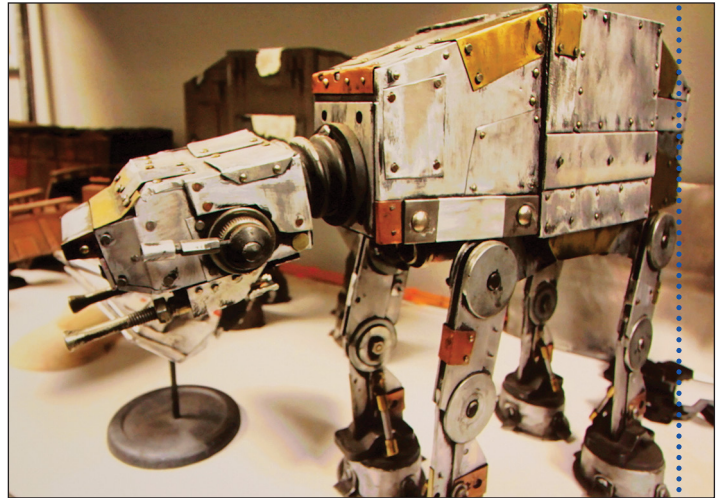
LOCATION: Disneyland Park



The location of It's a Small World's queue will be moved, and the surrounding area will receive a new parade route entrance and stroller area, allowing for guests to travel through the area more easily.

## TOYDARIAN HANDICRAFT

LOCATION: Disney's Hollywood Studios



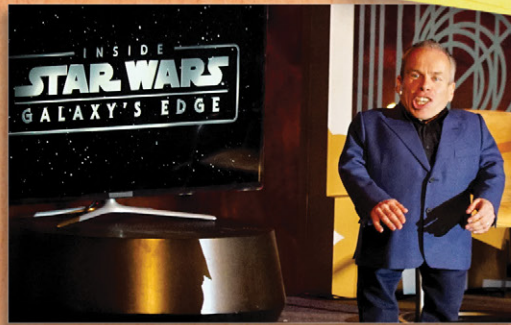
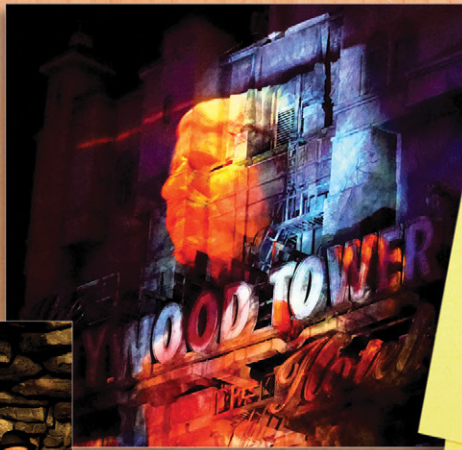
The recent Disney D23 Expo in Japan brought news and new images of Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge and the unnamed immersive Star Wars hotel. A toy store run by a Toydarian will sell "handmade" plushies featuring some of the Galaxy's most iconic characters, as well as toy ships kids in the galaxy played with. It was also announced that the new hotel will be connected to Galaxy's Edge via a bridge between the two, meaning guests can spend even more time immersed, without leaving their own personalized Star Wars story.





## PHOTO FINDS

Theme Parks and Attractions are always filled with fun things to see and our photographers are there to capture it all.



Disney held another **Star Wars Galactic Nights** event at Disney's Hollywood Studios, but this one was special, as it was held the weekend "Star Wars: The Last Jedi" premiered. **Actor Warwick Davis** led a panel discussion of filmmakers and Imagineers discussing the upcoming Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge theme park lands. There were also several short **projection shows on the Tower of Terror**, **photo opps**, special food and drinks, shows and more.



Our **Daycation Kingdom Vlogger** and reporter Frauke Kerrigan went **Over the Edge** for Give Kids the World Village. She and many others raised money to be able to **rappel down the side of the 32-story-tall Hyatt Regency Orlando** on International Drive. **Give Kids the World Village** is a nonprofit resort in Central Florida that gives dream vacations to critically-ill children and their families.



The **Gaylord Palms Resort** in Orlando made history on Dec. 7, 2017, or as they called it, **Kisstory**. A **Guinness World Records** representative confirmed they set a record for the **most couples kissing under mistletoe in one location** with 448 couples. The event was sponsored by Mentos, so attendees also were able to meet the **Mentos Yeti** and **Pure Fresh Gum Wallet Pack mascot**.





The **University of Central Florida Knights football team** paraded through the Magic Kingdom on Jan. 7 to celebrate the hometown team's championship perfect season. Marching were the UCF football team, cheerleaders and marching band, along with some Disney characters. Later in the year, the day after the **Super Bowl**, **Philadelphia Eagles Quarterback Nick Foles** also paraded through the Magic Kingdom to celebrate his team's win. Of course, the UCF students and **Foles and his family** enjoyed the parks as well.



PHOTO BY DISNEY



PHOTO BY BAINS LEE



**SeaWorld Orlando** held their first-ever **Three Kings Celebration** during the first week of the year. The event included a **Three Kings Processional**, special food and drinks, live music and more.



PHOTO BY JEFF DEPAOLI

Earlier this year, over a series of weekends, Charlie Brown, Snoopy and all of their comic-strip pals took over **Knott's Berry Farm** for the first-ever park-wide **Peanuts Celebration**. In addition to special Peanuts-themed shows, décor and more, it was also the **first in-park character appearance for Pig Pen**.



PHOTO BY JEFF DEPAOLI



PHOTO BY TIFFANY MINIK





# VERSUS

We put attractions head-to-head.

By **Tharin White**

Space Mountain is a true classic, an unchanged roller coaster masterpiece that has given millions upon millions of guests their first-ever true coaster experience. It's the iconic original indoor roller coaster and has easily stood the test of time. Its new rival, the high-tech launching Tron Lightcycle Power Run, has been announced for placement right next to Space Mountain at the Magic Kingdom, and it's already in place at Shanghai Disneyland. How will the original dark coaster hold up to the newest in Disney's E-ticket offering?

## MAGIC KINGDOM'S SPACE MOUNTAIN



## TRON LIGHTCYCLE POWER RUN

### STORY



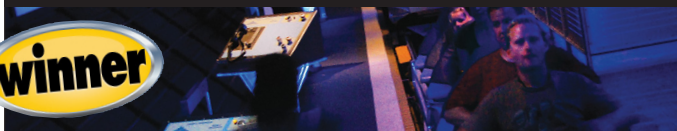
Space Mountain takes you on a high speed turbulent ride in the dark, but the theme is lacking in comparison to most Disney attractions. The star tunnel certainly leads to a Starport, but that doesn't hold up to a known storyline.



**winner**

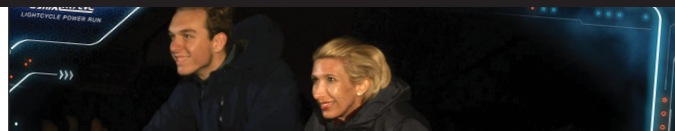
Tron has the power of a storyline many fans know and love before coming to the attraction. This story is built upon entering the grid, getting on your own Lightcycle and taking off on a high-speed trip, racing against the computer.

### FAMILY FRIENDLY



**winner**

Space Mountain is the first coaster for many people all over the world. Its 27 mph top speed allows for fun thrills and quick drops without too intense of an experience. This was my first ever roller coaster (although I will admit, it's because my parents got it and Spaceship Earth



While Tron is certainly a Disney ride, it's not for the faint of heart. This launching coaster will take you up to 60 mph on large sweeping turns while lying down on your own Lightcycle. The height requirement of 48 inches is also four inches more than Space Mountain.

### RIDE TIME



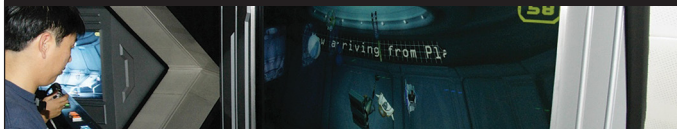
**winner**

Space Mountain is the winner in this category with over 45 more seconds of ride time. Now to be honest, this time does include the lift hill, which Tron doesn't use. The hill is still a great part of the ride though, as you get to see fellow guests on the PeopleMover or zooming by on another part of the track.



Tron is a shorter attraction time-wise, but with double the speed, you are still getting a serious roller coaster. It goes by pretty quickly, but you'll want to ride again and again.

### QUEUE



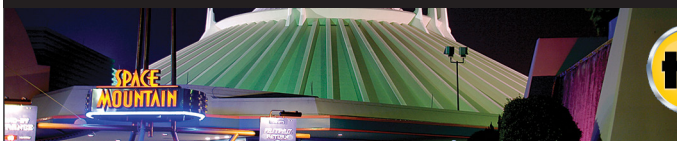
Space Mountain's line does have great parts like the star tunnel, the iconic music, interactive games and views into the ride, but it also has its faults. The large switchback area in the main part of the queue can be very loud and seemingly last forever as you watch people load on and blast off.



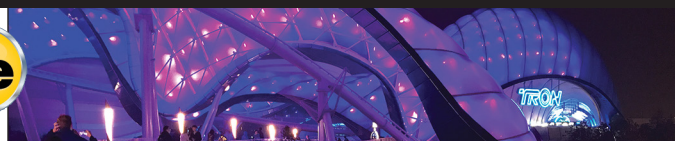
**winner**

Tron is a true statement to Disney's new thinking of queues. They make it part of the attraction with a story driven pre-show and numerous interesting things to look at. While both rides can have long lines, Tron is definitely the one I would want to stand in for longer.

### ARCHITECTURE



**tie**



Both attractions have become incredibly well known for their exteriors. Space Mountain's large white spires are now used almost like a logo for Magic Kingdom's attractions.

While Tron is new, its fluid, ultra-modern style is quickly becoming a fan favorite with its interactive lighting and futuristic stance.



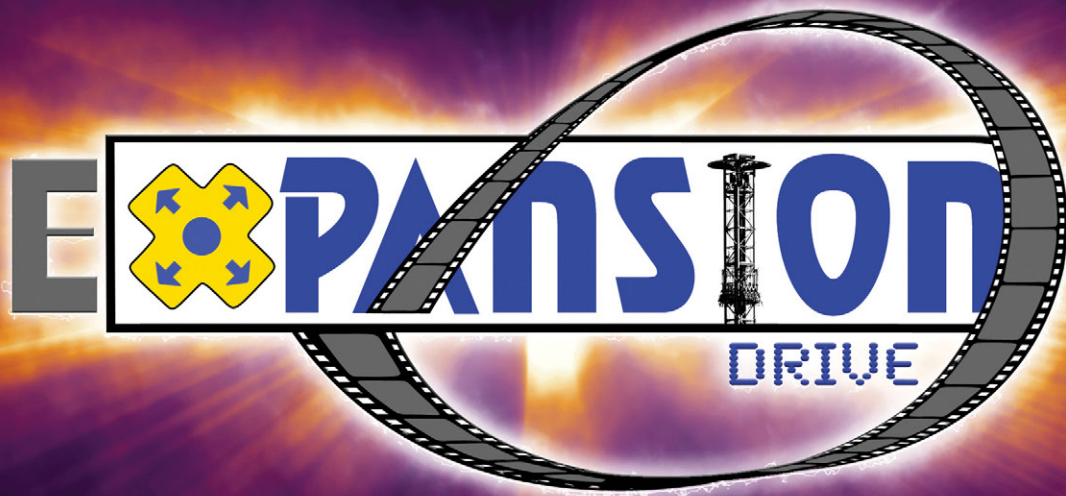
Theme Parks

Video Games

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Movies

Music & More

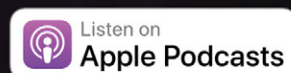


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# Universal's Mike Aiello on "The Coolest Toy Box to Play In"

If you know The Wizarding World of Harry Potter, Halloween Horror Nights or Universal Orlando's version of The Blues Brothers and the Grinch, you know Mike Aiello, at least through his work. Aiello began his stint at Universal in 1996 as a boat skipper at the Jaws attraction, and today he holds the title of Senior Director Entertainment Creative Development.

## As a native Floridian, did you grow up with the theme parks?

Yes, and my grandfather was on the city inspection team for Universal Studios. He literally stood on a dirt version of Hollywood Boulevard, with a hard hat on, and had a hamburger at Mel's Diner before anybody ever walked through the park.

## So you had an affinity for Universal even before you had a career. How did you get started?

I wanted a summer job while I was in high school, and I wanted to be a skipper on the Jaws boat because Jaws was my favorite film. We had passes, so we came all the time and I rode Jaws constantly. I knew the script like the back of my hand. I knew I was going to audition and be a skipper on the Jaws boat, and I thought I'd do that for the summer and then continue my education. What I didn't realize was this place was going to be my education. It's the coolest toy box to play in.

## What was your biggest takeaway from having that "film star" role?

I was 17 years old when I started as a skipper, killing Jaws 56 times a day for park guests and clicking people into the queues, and it really allowed me to interact with the guests on a one-to-one level. I loved talking to them, and I would ask how their day was and what they liked best about the park. I had no idea I'd be

doing what I'm doing now. I wanted to be an actor, and my next step at Universal was working at Nickelodeon Studios, which used to shoot there all through the 1990s.

## Did you get to slime people?

I sure did. That's an absolute honor! I was a tour guide, and then I auditioned to be a host. There was a show they did specifically for park guests called Game Lab, and it recreated Nickelodeon's Double-Dare style games. It had a finale of sliming one kid, and I got to do that. Slime is a natural resource, it comes from the center of the Earth, and we would dump it on kids' heads multiple times a day, to a chorus of cheers from people in the stands. I caught the performing bug and auditioned for all kinds of things at the park. I played Elwood Blues from The Blues Brothers for many years, and drove the Bluesmobile through the park. I was the Grinch for the first four years of Grinchmas. I was a scare actor during Halloween Horror Nights for multiple years, jumping out of a boo hole or holding a chainsaw and running through the streets. It was an awesome time. I was also in Poseidon's Fury, and I did the Horror Makeup Show.

## And from there?

My whole world changed in 2002 when I was brought in by Michael Roddy, the writer and director at the time, to punch up a show called "Bill and Ted's Excellent Halloween Adventure". I was writing a lot of sketch comedy and kind of caught his eye. He brought me in for a day and a half to brainstorm some jokes and write some bits for the show. I was a huge Horror Nights fan from the day the event started. I went every single year,



Aiello began as a summer-time skipper on the old Jaws boat ride, which gave him chance to interact with the park's visitors and pointed him towards a full-time career in theme park entertainment.



saw every single Bill and Ted that had been done up to that point, so I was well-versed in how it worked. To be able to write jokes for it was the coolest thing in the world. As fate would have it, the next year Roddy went on to do other things outside Universal, and they brought me and Kenny Babel on to write the entire

show for 2003. That's what got my foot in the door, meeting the Willy Wonkas, so to speak, of the creative process at Universal. Bill and Ted was my gateway, and that led me to writing maze treatments for Halloween.

**Could you describe what Halloween Horror Nights is, for people who have never been?**

Halloween Horror Nights is a seasonal event that takes place between September and October, and the main goal is to place our guests within a living horror film by way of nine haunted mazes based on multiple themes, some of which are top horror brands like The Walking Dead and An American Horror Story, and classics like An American Werewolf in London or John Carpenter's Halloween. But the other side of the coin is, we also create our own mazes and design our own characters with themes you've never seen before. We created a maze in 2016 called Scarecrow: The Reaping, which placed you within a Dust Bowl-era farm, and you're being attacked by vicious, gruesome scarecrows. It was our highest rated maze, which is amazing considering we put it next to Horror Story and The Shining. If you're a horror fan, it's going to be like a warm blanket. If you just love



Mike Aiello has racked up 22 years of creative work at Universal Orlando - and counting.



One of Aiello's many roles in Universal's live entertainment was as Elwood Blues in the classic song and dance show, The Blues Brothers. Here Aiello, left, poses with Dave Koenig as Jake Blues.

an amazing Halloween party, it provides that as well. For those nights we completely transform the Studios into a living nightmare, and it's the most fun you'll ever have having one.

**Having been so involved with the Bill and Ted show, how did it feel to watch the final show?**

It was very bittersweet, but my takeaway, sitting there with my team during the last show, was that we got to end it on our terms. So many shows just close and they're not given the opportunity to give the guests a goodbye. The news came well into our process, and when Jason Horn and I found out it would be the last year, that was the first thing that we instilled in the re-write of the show. Jason was really the driving force in the last few years of Bill and Ted, and we had a lot of emotions, but the top thing was, how do we give our guests a show that deserves to be the last show. When Act Three presented itself, with the amazing line that Jason came up with — "All this will have been a dream, but it was one you were lucky enough to have," — it really spoke volumes. There are hundreds of





Another crowning glory for Aiello was working on the first Wizarding World of Harry Potter area at Universal, where he was specifically called in to work on all the live entertainment, including the Frog Choir and the Tri-Wizard Tournament, as well as the conductor of the Hogwarts Express. Here he's celebrating on opening day in 2010 with a Butterbeer, of course!

people over the show's 23 years of existence that had that dream, and they were basically rock stars in an amazing show for a few nights in the year. And yes, there is an emotional value of it not being here anymore, but that's the one thing I tell anyone I've spoken to: it was a show we were lucky enough to be a part of and to witness, and we'll always have that. I've been in this business long enough to know there are endings and there are new beginnings. There's never say "never." I'll wait for the memo that says, "Let's bring them back." That memo may or may not ever come, but I was lucky enough to

have that journey, and I'm really happy for it. And I'm better for it.

#### **When you were doing *The Shining* at the last Halloween Horror Nights, how difficult was it to cast the Grady twins?**

It's always difficult to cast very small individuals, but I never found a night where we didn't have them in place, which is sometimes the case with some characters. The girls who played the Grady twins were in it to win it throughout the entire process. And everyone wondered how we found twins. Get them in the dress, create a make-up palate

that looks consistent, put them in the wig, and if they're a similar height, the audience will go with you. We were able to find girls who had similar facial structure so they did look similar to each other, but I kept getting with people who were coming out of the maze who thought the two girls were animatronics. About 15 or 20 times I got, "Is one girl real and one girl fake?" No, they were both real girls. They did an amazing job, as did all of the scare-actors. They're the life-blood of the event; they're the one thing that makes the heart pump.

#### **You've also worked on *The Wizarding World of Harry Potter*, one of the most popular areas of the park. How did that come about?**

In 2008 I got pulled into our vice president's office, and he said, "Ya know, we're doing this Potter thing in a couple of years. We've got to create some entertainment. I've heard you read all the books." I said, "Yes, sir, I've read them all." He said, "Okay, cool. Can you come up with some concepts?" and I said, "Uh. Yes?" Creating content for *The Wizarding World of Harry Potter*, at that time, just Hogsmeade, was the next major step in my career. I wrote all the treatments and concepts for the Frog Choir, Tri-Wizard Tournament, and the conductor of the Hogwarts Express. That propelled me into doing a nighttime show in honor of Universal's 100th Anniversary, which was *Universal Cinematic Spectacular*. It was my love letter to the Studios and the films the park represents.

#### **Tell us more about working on the *Harry Potter* entertainment.**

That was in 2007, three years before *Harry Potter* would be the amazing place it has become, so the conversation was really no different than other projects that I've been assigned. But it was my gateway into partnering with the Creative team, and identifying where the shows could go, what type of shows were needed, what the parameters were. Everyone was discovering how we would adapt those amazing books into what we hoped would be an outstanding and immersive theme park experience. There was a lot of authenticity we needed to maintain, and a fan base we



wanted to pay attention to so anything we did felt like a complimentary detail within the amazing world J.K. Rowling had created. The Wizarding World of Harry Potter was the only place in the entire world where you could walk through Hogsmeade, turn a corner, and before your eyes is Hogwarts Castle. I remember watching guests walk through that archway on opening day, and seeing people literally drop to their knees when they entered Hogsmeade, and cry when they came around the corner and saw Hogwarts. That is a very impactful and visceral experience. It was a game changer for our resort, and a game changer for theme parks.

**It seems like Comcast has given Universal, and especially the Creative department, a real shot in the arm in terms of saying, we believe in you. Go out and do it." Does it feel like that?**

Absolutely. Being here as long as I have, I've seen this business under multiple ownerships, and Comcast's confidence in our abilities provides us with the pathways and the means to be able to go for boundaries we never thought we could surpass. It is definitely the main reason we are able to do the things we do. We have an amazing company that supports us in our endeavors, that gives us the wand, so to speak, to be able to cast whatever spells we wish.

**What is the best piece of advice you can pass on, especially for high schoolers looking for a career?**

The best advice I can give is three simple words: Follow your bliss. Don't be scared to fail. Ride the wave and see where it takes you, and hope that when you hit the beach, you've had a good time. Everybody's path is going to be different and everybody's level of engagement is going to be unique, but the one synonymous statement is, make sure you're following that bliss.

---

Aiello and Lora Sauls, senior show director of Creative Development, give the Grinch a hug during the most recent holiday media event. Aiello has had many roles over the years at Universal. He played the The Grinch for the first four years of Grinchmas at Islands of Adventure, and then he worked on producing and overseeing the show in more recent years, maintaining that special Seussian link.



Parades, shows, haunted houses, special entertainment - Mike has been involved in it all over his long career with Universal. This photo was taken during one of his first times speaking to media about the holidays at Universal Orlando.





# Skipper Ben's TOP TEN

By "Skipper" Ben Rebstock

## Top 10 Places to go on a Date at Walt Disney World

Do you have that special someone you want to show a good time while at Walt Disney World? Well, you're in luck because there are hundreds of great date options at Disney, which makes narrowing down the best 10 very, very difficult. But it's my job, so here they are: The 10 best places to go on a date at Walt Disney World.



# 10

### DINNER AND A MOVIE AMC DISNEY SPRINGS 24 DINE-IN THEATRES

Don't have time for the traditional dinner and a movie? Then do both at the same time. Dine-In Theatres combine a fantastic meal with your movie. Everything from burgers to salads and sushi are served while you sit in large, cushioned chairs with a table in front of you. And if you need anything, just push your personal call button to be assisted at your seat. Oh, did I mention there's a full service bar with an extensive list of specialty drinks too? AMC's Dine-In Theatres modernize the standard dinner and a movie date option.



# 9

### MINIATURE GOLF FANTASIA GARDENS AND FAIRWAYS

Nestled in the Epcot resort area just across the street from the Swan Hotel sits one of the most unique miniature golf courses you will ever play. At this location, Disney hosts two 18-hole courses: Fantasia Gardens and Fantasia Fairways. Now, if you want a true challenge, play the Fairways course, which is a small version of a real golf course. But if you want to get romantic, take your date for a round on the Fantasia Gardens course, which is themed after the film with dancing hippos, sparkling snowflakes and adorable cherubs spread throughout the course. My two tips for a fantastic date: play at night under the stars and let your date win.





# 8

## TRADER SAM'S GROG GROTTO DISNEY'S POLYNESIAN VILLAGE RESORT

If your idea of a great date centers around cocktails, then you might as well drink it up at the most unique bar on Disney property. Tucked in the back of the Polynesian sits the world famous Trader Sam's, where the drinks are as unique as the bartenders serving them. The specialty beverages come in awesome glasses (that you can take home for an additional cost) and are served with flair, including jokes, special effects and a fair dose of crowd participation. So you'll want to order something different every time to see what happens. Take some time to read the stories in the menus and on the walls. And say hello to one of my old dates, the tiki goddess Uh-Oa, if you see her.



# 7

## AEROPHILE BALLOON FLIGHT DISNEY SPRINGS

For the next best date option at Disney World, head back over to Disney Springs, and then head straight up about 400 feet in the sky.

Aerophile (formerly known as Characters In

Flight) is a tethered flight in a helium balloon that soars above the Disney resort. Guests stand on a 360-degree observation platform under the balloon on this 10-minute experience that gives eagle-eye views of all of the Orlando-area attractions. Go at night for amazing views of all of the Disney theme parks and, if you time it just right, you can even catch a fireworks show or two while you are up there. If you'd like to include some thrills as part of your dates, you can't go wrong with Aerophile.



# 6

## DINNER AND FIREWORKS EPCOT

Speaking of fireworks, who doesn't love IllumiNations at Epcot? The wonderful music, the romantic setting around World Showcase Lagoon and, of course, the amazing fireworks display. And if you really want to impress your



date, pair up this viewing of the Disney classic nighttime spectacular with an amazing dinner at one of the romantic World Showcase restaurants! My personal recommendations include dining under the night sky in Mexico at the San Angel Inn or enjoying a great steak under romantic dim lighting in Canada at Le Cellier Steakhouse . . . or get the feeling of dining in the city of love at Chefs de France. Honestly, any restaurant in World Showcase will work. Just be sure to make your reservations early enough so you can get out and find a great spot for the show!





5

## TAKE A STROLL AT NIGHT DISNEY'S BOARDWALK

A walk down the BoardWalk — well, Disney's BoardWalk — is a very underrated romantic experience at Disney World. The BoardWalk is always lively with people walking around, boats sailing by, performers and plenty of drinking and dining options. You can move from spot to spot, enjoying drinks at AbracadaBar, dining at one of Disney's highest rated restaurants, Flying Fish, grabbing a nightcap at an outdoor table at Big River Grille, then sing the night away at Jellyrolls dueling piano bar. There are so many options at one spot, Disney's BoardWalk is a great option for a fun date night.



## WATCH MAGIC KINGDOM'S FIREWORKS SHOW DISNEY'S POLYNESIAN VILLAGE RESORT

4

You might be sensing a theme. Fireworks are very romantic. And while they are great to watch from inside the parks, finding unique places to view them can be even more special. Case in point, head across the Seven Seas Lagoon to the Polynesian and find a spot on the white sand beach to view Happily Ever After (or, time it right for Hallowishes or Holiday Wishes). The soundtrack to the show is pumped in through hidden speakers, so you'll get the full effect of the show. It's a much different experience seeing it nearly all by yourselves, considering how jam-packed it is in the Magic Kingdom. This is a must-do experience.



## MORIMOTO ASIA DISNEY SPRINGS

3

Sometimes, an impressive dinner is enough to make a date great. Right now, that place would be Morimoto Asia. You and your date will be impressed the moment you step into this massive dining establishment. The menu is prepared by Iron Chef Masaharu Morimoto and the dishes taste as amazing as they look. The décor would make you think you are dining at one of the fanciest restaurants in New York, Los Angeles or Las Vegas, and not at a shopping district in a theme park resort area.

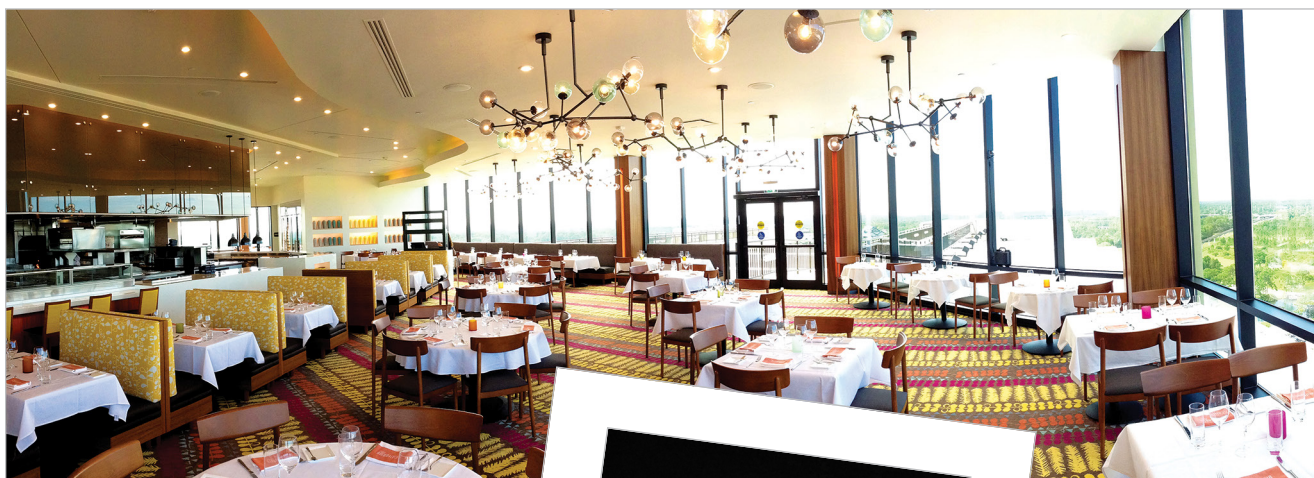


# 2

## DARK RIDES MAGIC KINGDOM

The Magic Kingdom is an

incredibly magical place. And if you know where to look, it can be very romantic too. Maybe it's old references to classic "Tunnel of Love" attractions, but going on dark rides in the Magic Kingdom can be a great date idea. Attractions such as Peter Pan's Flight, Under the Sea ~ Journey of The Little Mermaid and, especially The Haunted Mansion, can give you the chance to cozy up to your date in your own private ride vehicles. Even rides like the Tomorrowland Transit Authority PeopleMover and Dumbo the Flying Elephant can be fun on a date. Let loose and feel like a kid again!



# 1

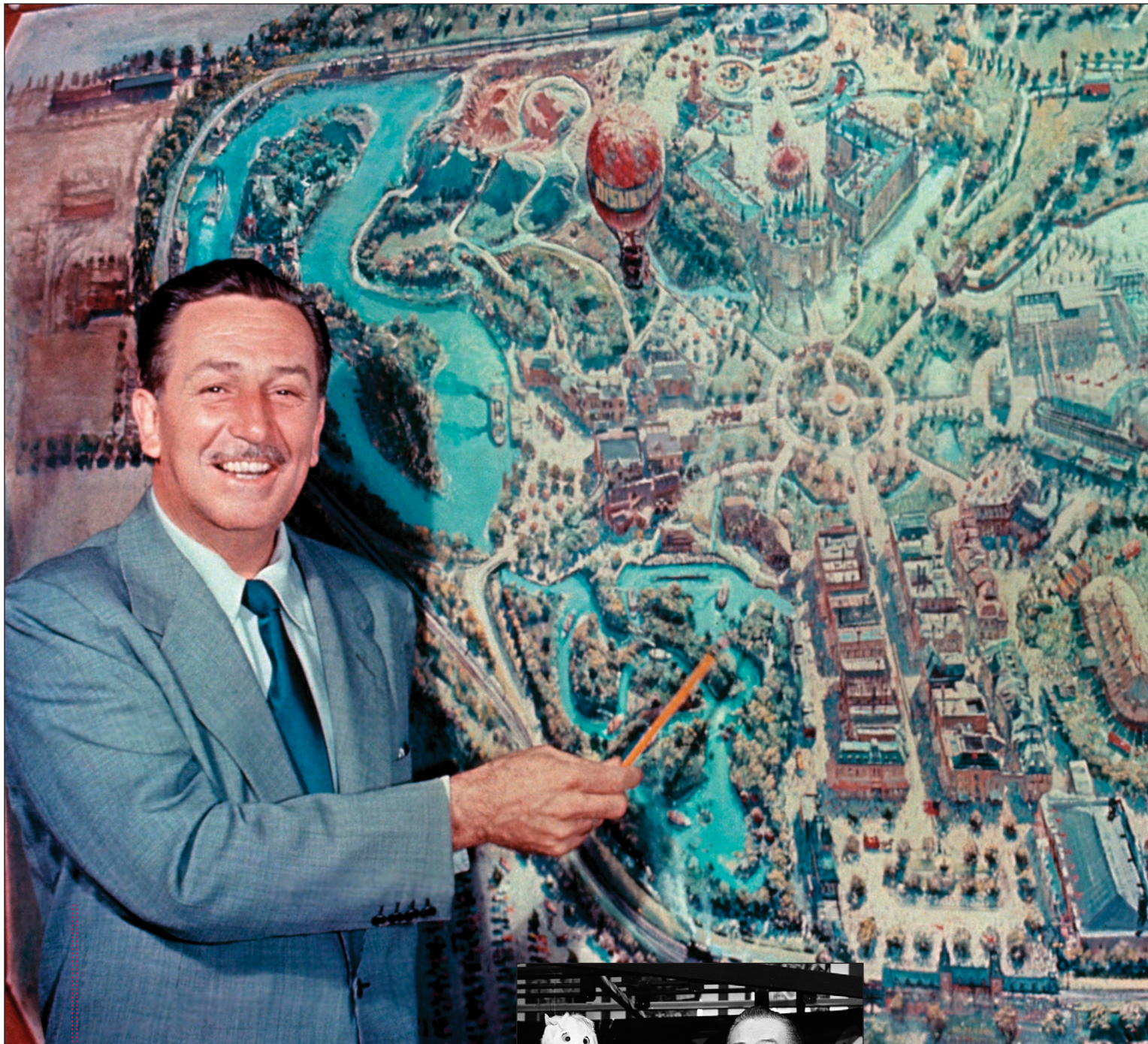
## CALIFORNIA GRILL DISNEY'S CONTEMPORARY RESORT

Want to really impress your date? Well, start by eating at one of the fanciest restaurants on Disney property, California Grill. Located at the very top of the Contemporary (which you'll access via private elevator), this amazing restaurant will knock your socks off with the delicious dishes coming from their open kitchen in their trendy dining room. But the real thrills come when you step out onto the observation deck and watch the Magic Kingdom fireworks show from high in the sky. The music from the show is pumped in and you are literally so high up that the fireworks are exploding below you. It's pure magic, and the absolute best way to spend a date at Walt Disney World.

**DO YOU AGREE  
WITH BEN  
OR HAVE A  
SUGGESTION  
FOR A FUTURE  
TOP TEN?**

Let us know at  
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Walt shows off a painting of an aerial view of Disneyland done in 1954 by artist Peter Ellenshaw on an animation storyboard he found at the studio. The image was used by Walt on his very first ABC television show to introduce the audience to the concept.



Walt personally selected artist Mary Blair to do the It's A Small World dolls in her unique style for an attraction he said would "bring joy to every child from 1 to 100." During construction, Blair decorated her hard hat with flowers and glitter.





# Little-Known Facts About Walt Disney

By Jim Korkis

Despite the many books, magazine and newspaper articles and more about Walt Disney, the man still remains a mystery over half a century after he passed away. While his name and many achievements are common knowledge, information about him as a person is scarce.

People are so dazzled by his creation of Mickey Mouse and friends, the first Technicolor animated feature film, Audio-Animatronics, Disneyland and so much more, that it never occurs to ask how tall he was, whether he ever had cats as pets, had severe sinus problems or if he loved baseball.

Walt was so clever in creating a “Walt Disney” brand, that he was able to keep much of his private life very private, despite his many interviews and public appearances. While there were many similarities to the man audiences saw on television every week, there were some significant differences as well.

“For filming his television introductions, he wore a metal brace because of an old polo injury, so his posture was always good. Walt was an all-American Midwestern, down-to-earth, talented showman. I found Walt to be a paradox: friendly, but a man who didn’t appear to have close friendships. In some ways worldly, but in others, quite unsophisticated. In some ways, he reminded me of Fred MacMurray’s character in “The Absent-Minded Professor”, remembered Disney producer Harry Tytle.



Walt and his wife Lillian in her backyard rose garden at their last home on Carolwood Drive.

In 1991, Disney Legend Van France recalled his first meeting with Walt: “Somehow I’d imagined that Walt Disney would have the soft, delicate hands of an artist drawing Mickey Mouse. But my hand met the firm grip of a man who had grown up doing hard farm labor and working for his father in construction.”

“He was a lot shaggier in real life than he appeared in a nice pressed suit on television,” said his nephew Roy Disney. “He was a pretty casual dresser and didn’t pay a hell of a lot of attention to whether his hair was combed or not.”

Here are a handful of surprising things most people do not know about Walt Disney:

## Lip Reading

Walt Disney was embarrassed to read





Walt personally owned the Disneyland Railroad trains through his RETLAW company and would sometimes take over as engineer on weekend afternoons for several trips around the park.

in public because his lips moved when he read something silently. At Benton Elementary School in Marceline, Missouri, Walt learned how to read from a series of books called McGuffey Eclectic Readers. The first reader taught by using the phonics method of sounding out the words.

"He did sort of 'lip read.' I've thought about that, and it could have been only on dialogue passages," his daughter Diane Disney Miller wrote to me. "I find myself doing that sometimes, to help get a better sense of the words the way they might have been said. We had a Treasury of the McGuffey Readers in our home ever since I can remember. I used to read through it."

In the film of Walt doing the voice of

Mickey Mouse standing next to Billy Bletcher, who is doing the voice of Pete for the cartoon short "Mr. Mouse Takes a Trip" (1940), it can clearly be seen that Walt is silently mouthing Pete's lines off the script as he reads it.

### The Gray Seal

Walt was a voracious reader and even read the entire works of Mark Twain when he was a young boy. He said he was especially fond of the stories of Sir Walter Scott ("Ivanhoe"), Charles Dickens ("Oliver Twist") and Robert Louis Stevenson ("Treasure Island").

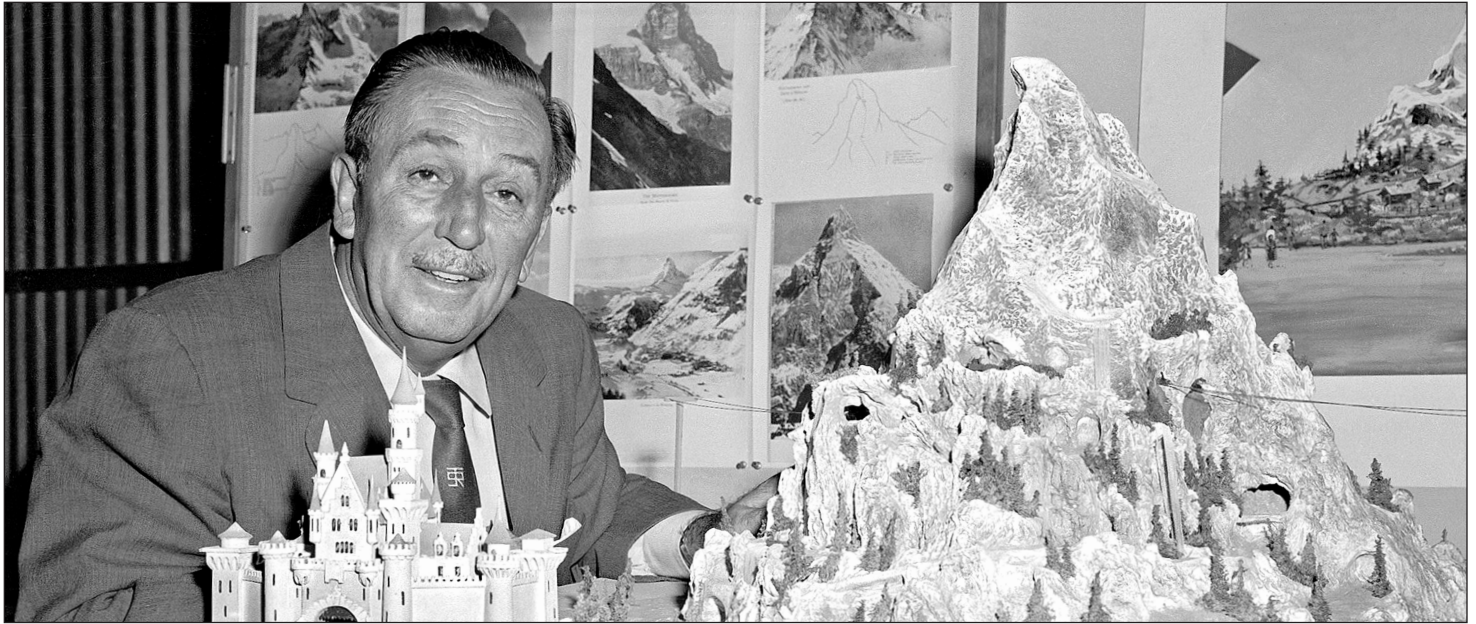
Like many young boys, Walt was engrossed by the stories of Horatio Alger and the adventures of Tom Swift. He was

also taken by a now obscure adventure series from pulp magazines called Jimmie Dale, the infamous Gray Seal by Frank Lucius Packard.

Dale appeared in serial installments in various magazines before they were compiled into novels. A copy of "Jimmie Dale and the Blue Envelope Murder" appears on Walt's desk at the Hyperion studio in a 1935 publicity photo.

Dale was sort of an amateur private eye/safecracker and master of disguise in New York. His secret identity was the two fisted mystery man "Gray Seal" who could open even the most tightly guarded safes and left his calling card, a gray diamond paper seal, but never stole anything.





When the press asked Walt why his Matterhorn had holes in it, he replied, "Because it's a Swiss mountain."

Walter B. Gibson, who created the famous character of The Shadow, has stated he was influenced by the Jimmie Dale stories. In 1952, Walt bought the rights to the Jimmie Dale stories to develop into a television series.

Several people, including his son-in-law Ron Miller, remember Walt acting out these stories over the years at the Disney Studio. ABC and later NBC were completely uninterested in such a television series.

### Conservationist

Walt Disney was honorary chairman of the National Wildlife Federation for multiple years, delivering public service announcements on television in 1956, 1957, 1961 and 1964.

For National Wildlife Week in March 1956, Walt appeared on camera and said, "You've probably heard people talk about conservation. Well, conservation isn't just the business of a few people. It's a matter that concerns all of us. It's a science whose principles are written in the oldest code in the world, the laws of nature."

"The natural resources of our vast continent are not inexhaustible. But if we will use our riches wisely, if we will protect our wildlife and preserve our lakes and streams, these things will last us for generations to come."

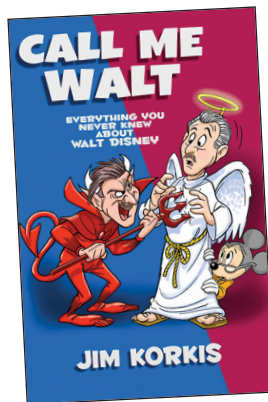


Imagineer Harriet Burns used the flexibility of Walt's favorite cashmere sweater to create the effect on the Tiki birds' torsos when they breathed.





Walt Disney and his wife Lillian, center, pose with their daughters and their husbands. On the left are Diane and Ron Miller. On the right are Sharon and Robert Brown.



Animator and director Dave Bennett drew this book cover to reflect the two common stereotypes many people have today about Walt Disney. As people who actually knew him pass away, many misunderstandings and falsehoods have begun to appear.

Long before the celebration of the first Earth Day in 1970, Walt Disney was an aggressive advocate for the importance of conservation and protecting nature and its inhabitants.

## Boy Scout

Walt joined a Boy Scout troop in 1914, formed from Sunday school classes in the Congregational church that his family attended in Kansas City, Missouri. He was not in the troop very long, reaching only the Tenderfoot level, but he maintained a great respect for the Boy Scouts throughout his life.

He even had the Boy Scouts review the script for the Donald Duck short, "Good Scouts" (1938) where Huey, Dewey and Louie are outdoor scouts before Walt put the film into production.

He received the Silver Buffalo award from the Boy Scouts in 1946. It is the highest award given by the Boy Scouts and is presented for noteworthy and extraordinary service to youth on a national basis.

He sponsored a Boy Scout troop that met at the Disney Studio on Monday nights and Walt would often attend.

## Practical Joker

Walt was not a saint, and loved having fun at the expense of others. It was part of the culture of animators at the time to play practical jokes on each other.

Walt sometimes loved teasing the unsuspecting and shy animator Ub Iwerks, who had animated his first three films all by himself. Walt often took Iwerks' silence as acceptance.

A classic prank around 1927 was

when Walt arranged a date with a pretty co-worker named Margaret Metzinger, who Ub liked, but lacked the courage to ask out. Walt sent Ub to the date in his place, but Ub was unaware he'd be meeting Margaret. She was also unaware that Ub was taking Walt's place. It was an awkward dinner date, especially for the often tongue-tied Ub.

Walt hid behind some nearby plants in the restaurant and filmed much of it, and then ran the film for other artists at the studio making comments. He was completely oblivious to the fact that Ub felt humiliated. Walt just felt it was funny.

## Hat Lover

Walt felt wearing a fedora at a slight angle made him look dashing. He owned an assortment of various hats including gray fedoras, feathered Tyroleans, white straw panamas and even tan Stetsons.

"It was characteristic of him that the hats he wore, although expensive, were rather battered and askew," said Disney Producer Harry Tytle.

"He wore hats quite a bit", said Walt's niece Marjorie Davis. "He would pick them up by the crown and put them on his head and Aunt Lilly would say, 'Walt, fix that hat!' One time she took his hat off his head – that's when he had a convertible – and threw it out of the car. He stopped the car, went back and got it. He took one of his hats, made a heart shape out of the crown, had it bronzed and filled it with flowers for Aunt Lilly for Valentine's Day."

The hat was put on a plaque reading "To Lilly from Walt. February 15, 1941" and was still hanging at their Carolwood Drive home when Lillian passed away.

He only wore the famous Mickey Mouse ears once that we know of, when his young grandson Christopher playfully put his own pair on his grandfather's head while a photographer was taking pictures of them.

## Dirty Jokes

One of the things Walt picked up during his time in France was swearing, a common habit among the much older military personnel with whom he associated.

"He never told dirty jokes or engaged



in innuendo and smutty suggestion," said Animator Frank Thomas. "He knew and used only four or five swear words, all of them pretty mild these days."

Walt never swore around women or children. He once fired an animator on the spot for telling a dirty joke about Mickey Mouse.

"Telling a dirty joke to Walt could evoke a stony silence. He believed that sex was a private matter and that is the way he preferred to leave it," wrote Author Bob Thomas.

### The Last Car

Walt preferred to drive himself and didn't have a regular chauffeur. His last car was a Mercedes 230 SL.

Walt recalled, "One day I was driving home, and as I was waiting at a stop signal, I looked in a showroom and saw a beautiful Mercedes Benz coupe. 'Gee, I wish I could afford that' I said to myself and then I drove on. I had gone a couple of blocks when I said, 'But I can!' so I turned right around and went back and bought it."

Walt wrote to his sister Ruth on Dec. 1, 1964, "I bought myself a jazzy little sports car this year. A Mercedes 230 SL. That probably won't mean much to you. Anyway, it's a car for the man who thinks young and I am just the guy for it."

"I thought for a while I was going to have to fight Sharon (his daughter) for possession of it. I loaned it to her one week while we were away and she threatened to steal it. It's a little beauty and almost as good as a blonde on each arm for getting a little envy from my fellow men."

The two seat sports car cost \$11,000, which was a lot of money in those days for a car. Perhaps the specter of his thrifty father haunted him because Walt felt guilty about the extravagance, even though he could well afford it. So he rented the car to the Disney studio at a rate of \$100 a day for the movie "That Darn Cat!" (1965) and it is driven by Roddy McDowall's character in that film.

### Sportsman

Walt and his wife Lillian had season boxes at both the Hollywood Park race track (that he helped finance as a shareholder along with other celebrities in 1938) and the Santa Anita race track. He



Walt assists actress Shirley Temple Black with cutting the ribbon to open the Sleeping Beauty Castle Walkthrough in April, 1957.

still owned shares in the Hollywood Park Turf Club, the owner of the Hollywood Park race track, at the time of his death.

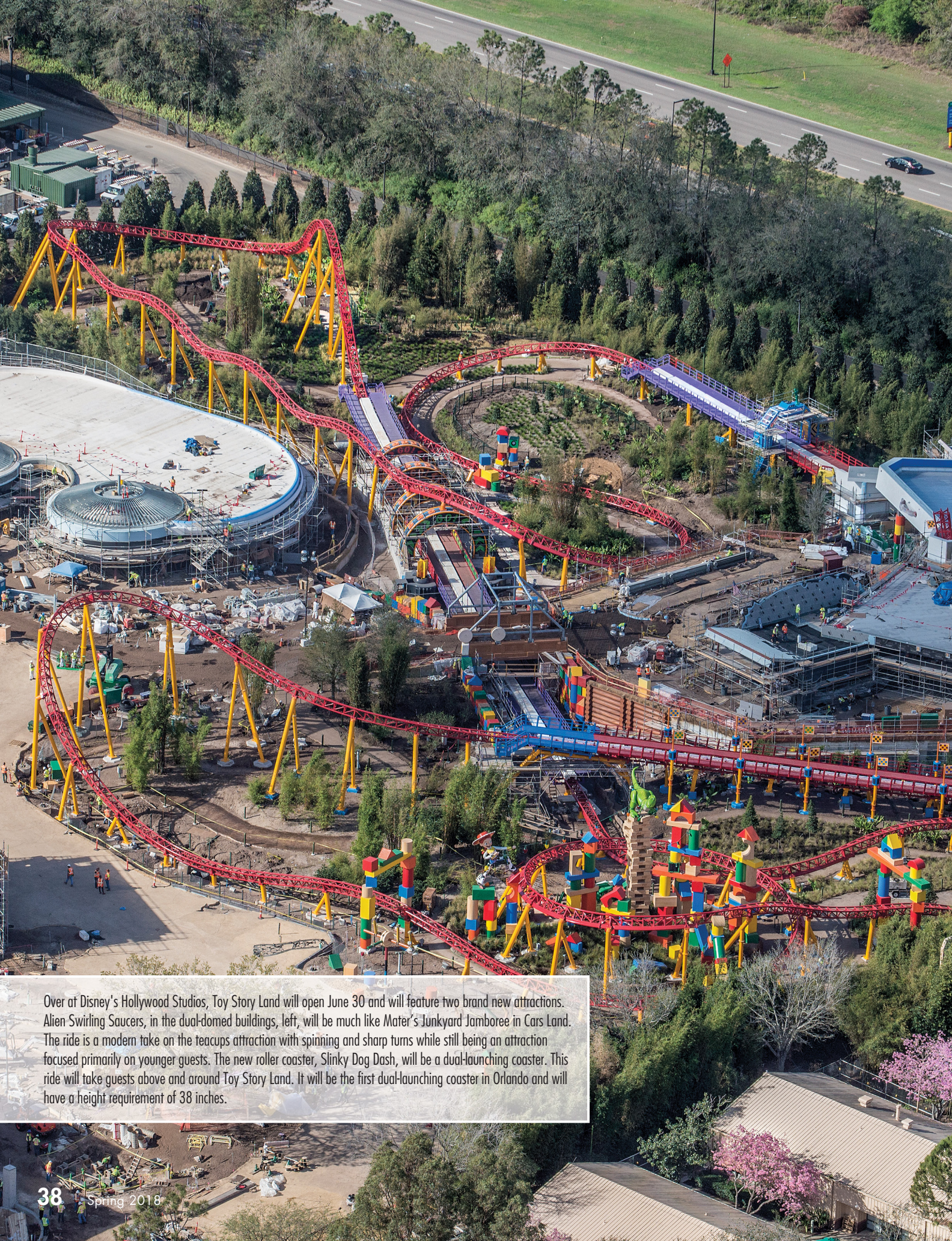
Walt had a box at Dodger Stadium about three rows up behind first base. The Disney Studio had a box nearby as well. His daughter Diane and her husband often met her parents for dinner in the Stadium Club before a game.

In 1966, Walt Disney proposed to buy a minority share in the California Angels baseball team, but the deal was never

completed and Walt passed away shortly afterwards. Walt served on the Angels' original board of directors.

*All these stories and more including ones about religion, politics and urban myths appear in greater detail in my recent book, "Call Me Walt: Everything You Never Knew About Walt Disney", available from Amazon.com and ThemeParkPress.com.*





Over at Disney's Hollywood Studios, Toy Story Land will open June 30 and will feature two brand new attractions. Alien Swirling Saucers, in the dual-domed buildings, left, will be much like Mater's Junkyard Jamboree in Cars Land. The ride is a modern take on the teacups attraction with spinning and sharp turns while still being an attraction focused primarily on younger guests. The new roller coaster, Slinky Dog Dash, will be a dual-launching coaster. This ride will take guests above and around Toy Story Land. It will be the first dual-launching coaster in Orlando and will have a height requirement of 38 inches.



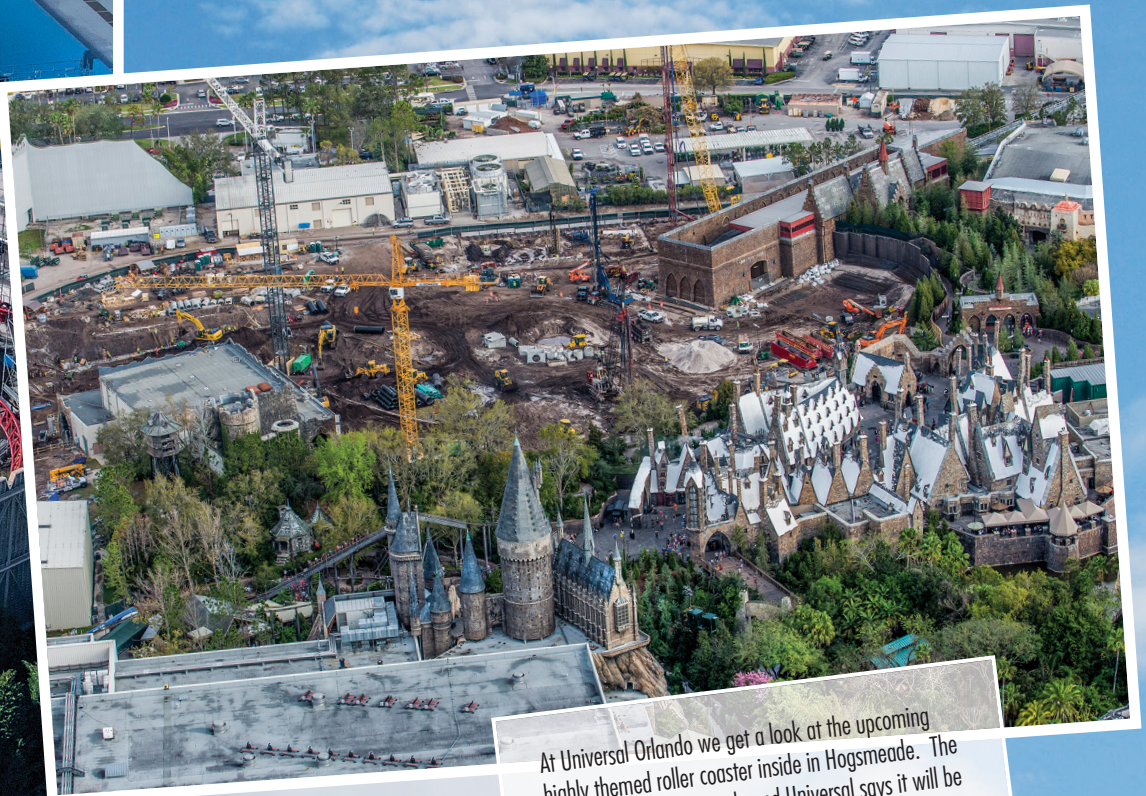


# Construction From the Sky:

Story By Tharin White

PHOTOS BY JONATHAN RODRIGUEZ/SUBLIME IMAGE PHOTOGRAPHY

Orlando's theme parks and attractions are in a constant state of construction. Whether it's refurbishment, remodeling or a new site altogether, somewhere there will be a crane, or two, or more. These photos showcase only a few of the construction projects happening in Orlando this year.



At Universal Orlando we get a look at the upcoming highly themed roller coaster inside in Hogsmeade. The coaster will be family style and Universal says it will be the most themed coaster experience they have ever created. This area is the site of the former Dragon Challenge coaster that closed last year. The red squares on top of the show building, bottom left, are the spotlights and fireworks launching pads used for The Nighttime Lights at Hogwarts Castle projection show.





Moving to Universal's Volcano Bay water park, you can see just how close it is to Interstate 4. The current construction, top right, is an expansion already in the works for the park. Volcano Bay opened last year on May 25. This is also a great perspective to imagine the wide sweeping views of Volcano Bay from the recently opened Cabana Bay towers, bottom.



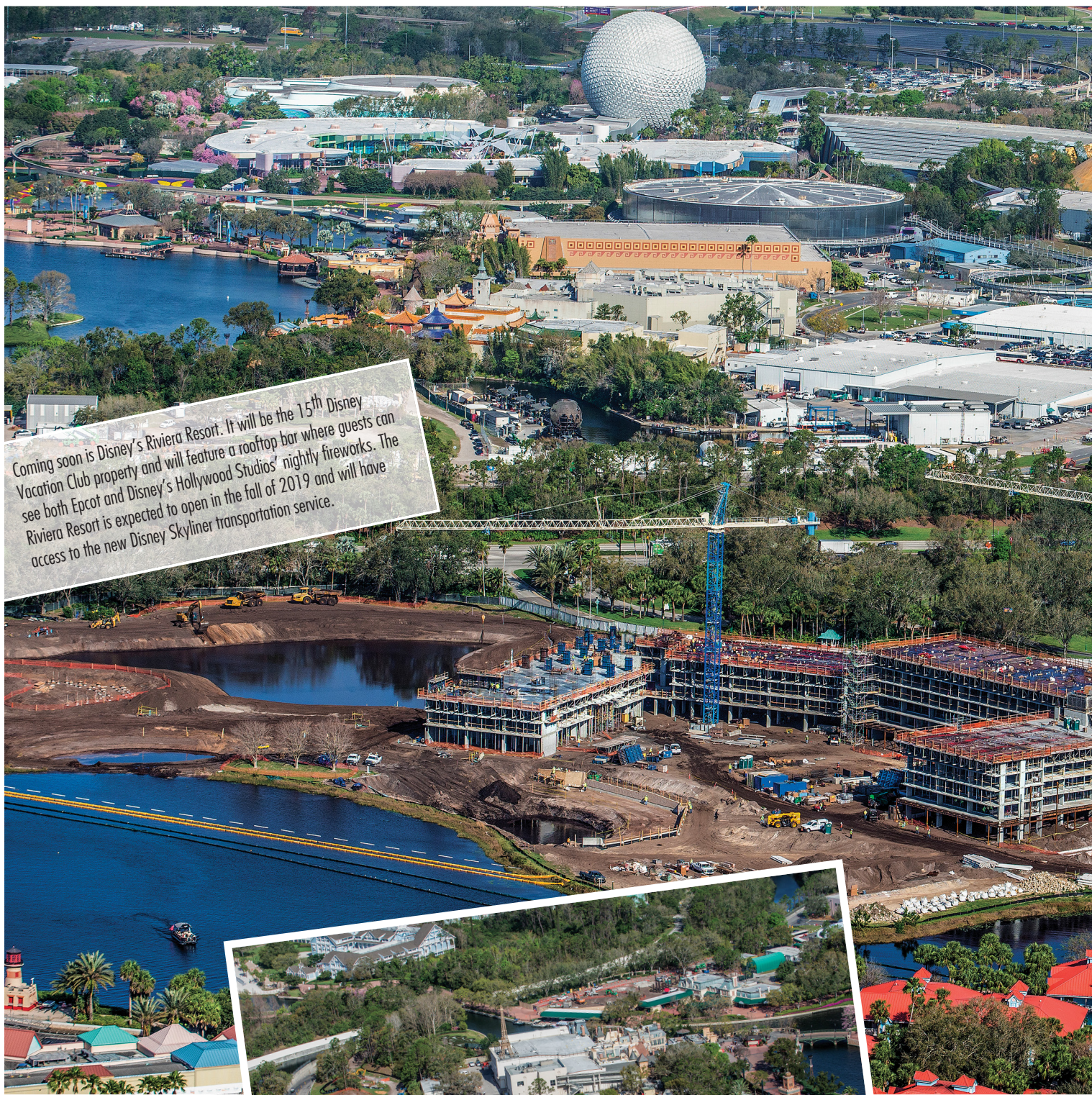
At Disney's Animal Kingdom we take a look at Pandora: The World of Avatar. While there is no current construction going on in Pandora, this shot helps to showcase the massive amount of steelwork it takes to make the mountains. The show building, bottom left, houses both the Flight of Passage and Na'vi River Journey rides.





Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge will be the biggest expansion in Disney Parks history. This new immersive land will feature a shopping district, numerous food locations and two attractions. The dirt mountains, top center, are the rumored location for the upcoming Star Wars themed hotel. This hotel will offer a new level of immersion for a lodging experience, as well as offering a private access into Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge. The Millennium Falcon attraction, right, will allow guests to drive the Falcon on a daring space journey. Whereas the First Order Battle attraction, left, will place guests in the middle of a battle inside a Star Destroyer. The domed building, middle left, will be one of the largest Disney food service areas on property.





Coming soon is Disney's Riviera Resort. It will be the 15<sup>th</sup> Disney Vacation Club property and will feature a rooftop bar where guests can see both Epcot and Disney's Hollywood Studios' nightly fireworks. The Riviera Resort is expected to open in the fall of 2019 and will have access to the new Disney Skyliner transportation service.

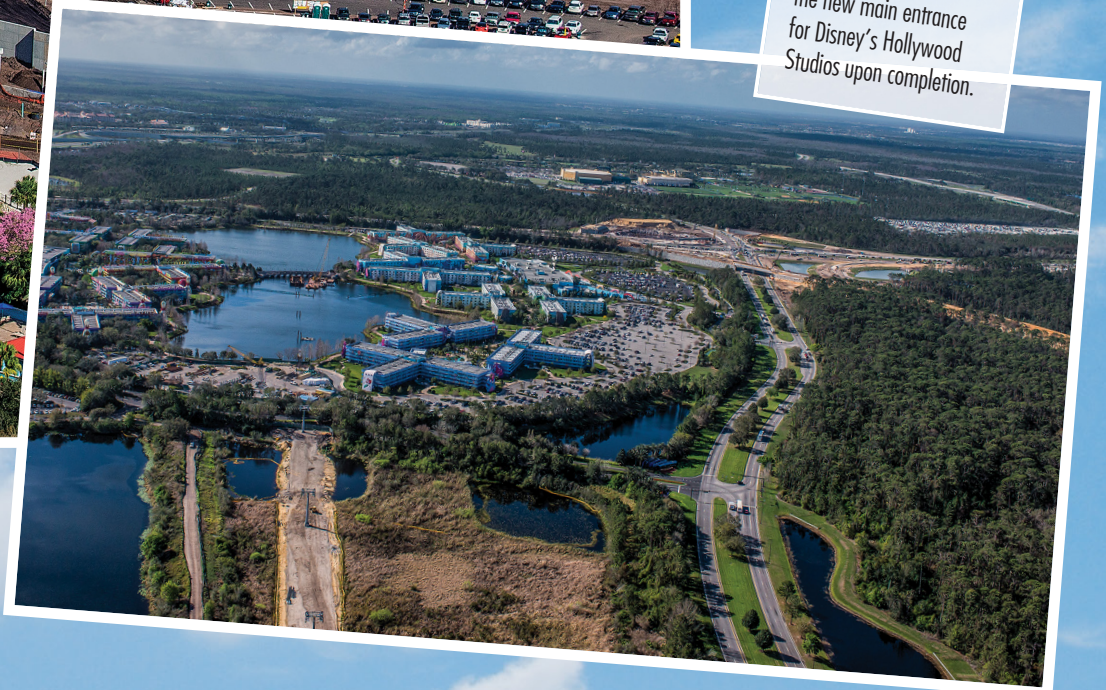


Over at Epcot, construction is continuing on a Skyliner Gondola station, top right, and for the Ratatouille ride, bottom. The Ratatouille attraction will make France the third country in World Showcase to feature a ride.





The long dirt path, bottom center, heading to the Pop Century and Art of Animation Resorts will be part of the upcoming Disney Skyliner service. This gondola-based transportation will take guests above Disney property for a scenic trip to Epcot, Hollywood Studios, Pop Century, Art of Animation, Caribbean Beach Resort and the Riviera Resort. The dirt road, top right, will be the new main entrance for Disney's Hollywood Studios upon completion.







Mario Andretti himself making one of the Grill's delicious hand-made pizzas.

Racers are all geared up and ready to roll on one of Andretti's three tracks.



# Andretti Brings Multiple Attractions Under One Roof

By Andy Haynes

## Introduction

Named after the world famous racing dynasty, the Andretti family, it makes sense that Andretti Indoor Karting & Games would feature racing. But from the moment you walk into the facility, you'll know it's so much more. Andretti's brand new Orlando location features over 150,000 square feet of games, attractions, bars, restaurants and karting. "We don't consider ourselves a go-kart facility, necessarily," said Eddie Hamann, managing member of the Orlando facility. "At the end of the day, racing is not for everybody. Here you can bring the entire family and they can all have fun together."

Andretti Orlando, which opened last year, is located in the heart of the tourist district on Universal Boulevard, right behind the Orange County Convention Center. This state of the art complex is intended to be the new flagship location of the franchise, which already has facilities in Georgia. "Orlando is booming and tourists are increasing," said Stuart Hersh, general manager. "It's a great place to jump in and produce some entertainment." Plans are already underway for two new locations in Texas, with more spreading across the country in the years to come. The facility is completely self-contained with all attractions indoors. "You can come in any day, any time and still experience the facility without worrying about the weather," added Hamann.

There's no cover charge to enter, so guests only have to pay for the attractions they wish to experience. Those looking to

save big at Andretti can purchase an inexpensive membership, which grants them discounts on racing, gaming, attractions and food for an entire year, and it's good for all locations. Andretti Orlando also features over 10,000 square feet of meeting space which can be used for events, birthday parties, team building activities and more.

## Racing

The main attraction at Andretti Orlando is, of course, the racing. The facility features over 3,000 feet of raceway divided into three different tracks. On special occasions, the tracks can even be combined together forming the single longest track of any indoor karting facility in the world. The tracks feature long straight-aways, banked turns, elevation changes and even a panoramic view of Universal Boulevard and the convention center.

The karts are special-made electric Sodi RTX Superkarts. The electric karts don't produce the same sort of fumes their gas counterparts create, so they're perfect for the indoor environment. "We wanted to give our children a better environment by making our facility all electric cars," said Hamann. "And, you can actually go faster than in a gas car." Racing around the tracks, these little karts can reach a blistering 40 miles per hour!

Races last approximately seven minutes, depending on the track and can be purchased individually or in packs of three. Anyone over the age of seven and above 48" tall can race, though the smaller

kids, and those without driver's licenses or permits, have to participate in special Junior and Intermediate races. All racers are outfitted with a protective helmet and instructed on the track rules before each race including "no bumping" and what each colored flag means. At the conclusion of each race, drivers are sent a detailed email with their results and times.

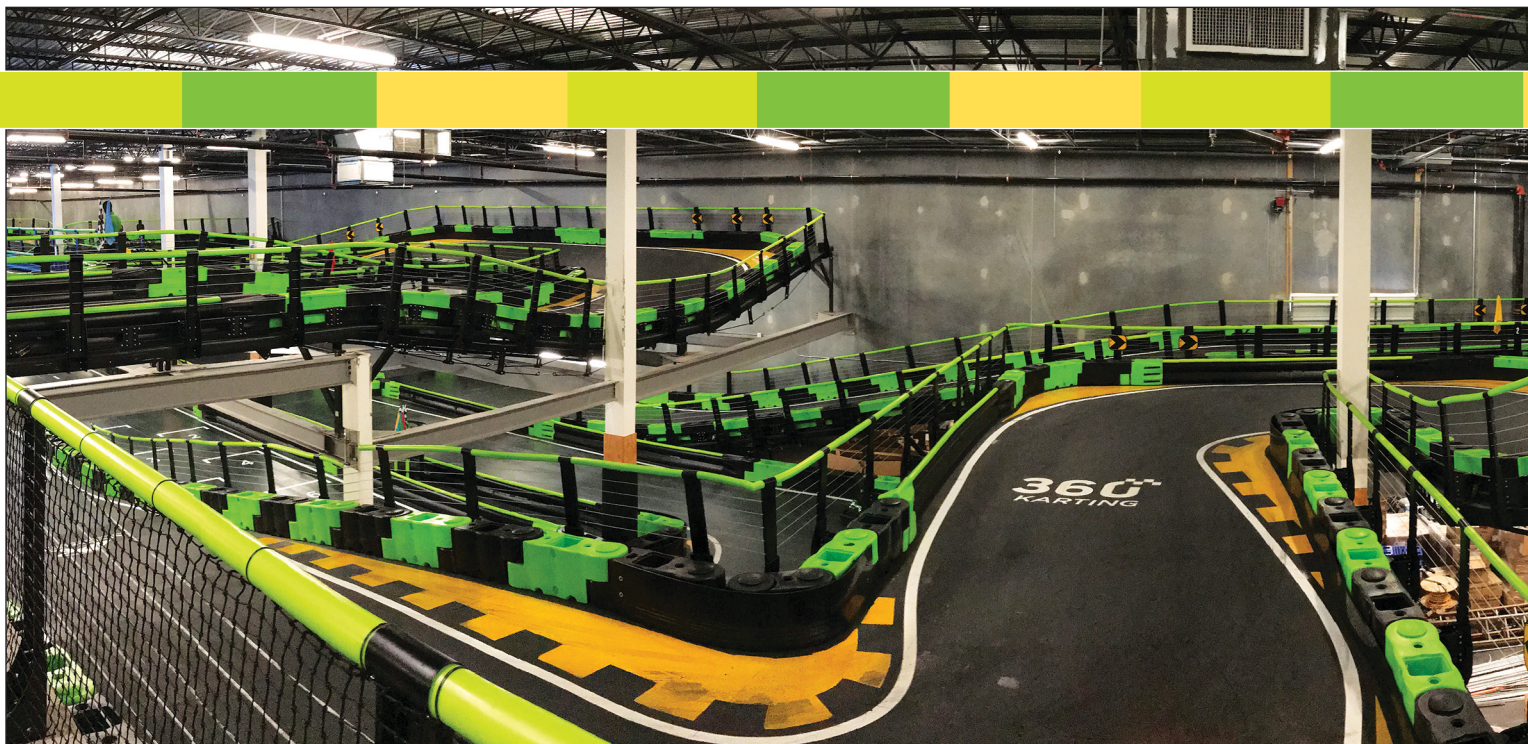
## Attractions

One of the most surprising things about Andretti Orlando is the sheer amount of non-karting activities available. "The Andretti name says 'High quality racing', but we want more for [our guests] to do here than just that," said Hersh. "It's



The Andretti family, pictured here at the grand opening with Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs and company officials, remains active in the management of the facility.





Racers will zoom between floors as they race through the twisting course and around banked turns.



If racing isn't your thing, you can experience one of many other attractions including bowling.

more than racing; it's fun for a whole day."

The main floor of the facility contains an arcade with over 100 different machines to play for fun or for tickets to be redeemed later for all sorts of prizes. Here guests can also try one of several virtual experiences. Hologate lets players don a virtual reality headset and step into an intense firefight with alien robots as they duck and dodge enemy fire. The XD Dark Ride Motion

Theater has guests bouncing and bumping along with an immersive 7D experience while fighting werewolves, zombies and more. The CXC Motion Pro II racing simulators use virtual reality and specially designed force-feedback devices to fully immerse guests as they race against each other on some of the most famous tracks in the world. These are the same machines that professional drivers use to train on

and Andretti is currently the only place in the world for the public to try them.

It's not all simulators though. Andretti also has several attractions for people who want to get up and move. Suspended above the arcade is a Sky Trail indoor ropes course featuring 10 different obstacles and an incredibly unique curved-rail zip-line. Coming down from the ropes course, guests can head to the massive two story, 4,000-square-foot laser tag arena. Keeping the racing theme of the facility, the arena is designed to resemble the inside of a car engine with plenty of nooks and crannies to hide in and shoot from. And, when all else fails, Andretti features 12 lanes of classic, boutique style bowling which can be rented by the hour. Tip: Ask about rush hour times for the bowling to get special discounts.

### Bars and Restaurant

When the need for food or drink arises, guests don't need to travel far, as Andretti Orlando features not one, but two different bars and the Andretti Grill within the facility. The main bar on the ground floor, and the luxurious Sky Bar on the second floor, are full bars featuring beer, wine and cocktails. Particularly thirsty guests can opt for the "Beer Tube" containing 100 ounces of beer! Both bars





PHOTO BY ANDRETTI ORLANDO

The arcade features more than 100 different games and a Sky Trail ropes course overhead.

also serve a full assortment of wines from the Andretti Winery in Napa Valley and have more than 100 televisions playing sports from around the world. The Sky Bar also features a panoramic view of the tracks as well as a blue domed roof that glows at night through the use of LEDs.

At the Andretti Grill, guests can enjoy a wide variety of delicious food options prepared on site. "Early on with Mario [Andretti]," said Hamann, "he told us, whatever you do on this property, the food has to be good." The restaurant features a full-size wood-fire pizza oven flown in from Italy, a "Big Green Egg" slow cooker for smoked meats, and a "from-scratch" kitchen stocked with fresh and authentic ingredients. The restaurant's menu, designed by an executive chef, has everything from salads and nachos to hand-crafted burgers and hand-tossed pizzas, all made to order. A must try is the "Brickyard," a classic burger with two fried eggs, two types of cheese and, instead of buns, two grilled cheese sandwiches, one with bacon and one with jalapenos.

So if the hot weather has you down, or you're just looking for fun activities the whole family can enjoy, including dinner, you'll want to visit Andretti Indoor Karting and Games in Orlando.



By using state-of-the-art technology, like the CXC Motion Pro II racing simulators, Andretti Indoor Karting & Games keeps attractions on the cutting edge.





The 948-room Grand Californian after its largest renovation since 2001.

The six-story Great Lobby features plush seating for guests, with immediate access to restaurants, fitness center and more.



## Resort **REPORT**

By Tiffany Mink

# Disneyland's Grand Californian Hotel & Spa

Offering a Superior Stay After Resort-Wide Renovation

**W**orld renowned for stellar hospitality and customer service, Disney Parks and Resorts offers some of the best accommodations across the globe, and nowhere is that more prevalent than the newly refurbished Grand Californian Hotel & Spa at the Disneyland Resort. The 948-room hotel has been ranked a AAA Four Diamond hotel for the sixteenth year in a row, and after the most extensive refurbishment since the hotel's 2001 opening, guests can expect an unparalleled experience.

The overhaul brings a more contemporary approach to the late 1800s Arts and Crafts movement that has influenced the design aesthetic of the hotel. The six-story Great Hall lobby has been upgraded with new, stylish furnishings and design elements throughout the furniture pieces, upholstery, woodwork and carpeting. Even new leather-topped stools feature Hidden Mickeys for guests to discover. The redesigned space is perfect for the family to lounge around in, with plenty of lush sofas and chairs, or joining friends to admire the lobby's focal point — the cavernous fireplace and its roaring fire. With the new renovation, the lobby now has what can best be described as living rooms within living rooms for a more communal atmosphere for group gatherings. Tables have also been raised to allow for easier eating and drinking as the resort introduces lobby service, a service for guests to order select menu offerings from the nearby lounge.

The lodge-style Hearthstone Lounge features a complete bar and shareable bites like charcuterie and cheese, fish tacos and artisanal pizzas. In the morning, the space offers coffee and pastries for guests to start their day. In addition, there's the grab-and-go White Water Snacks for bagels, burgers and salads, and the highly acclaimed fine-dining restaurant Napa Rose. This upscale eatery celebrates California cuisine as



The newly refreshed Veranda offers complimentary food, drink and fireworks viewing for club level guests.





The Hearthstone Lounge offers a complete bar and shareable bites, and it's located just off of the lobby.

told by award-winning chef Andrew Sutton with seasonal flavors and rare, regional wines.

But Napa Rose isn't the only restaurant bringing in outside guests to the resort. Storytellers Café is frequented for breakfast, lunch and dinner, each offering a different experience in a California folklore setting. The lunch à la carte dining style is followed by the all-you-can-eat dinner service. However, breakfast is where reservations are harder to come by as it's one of three character dining options outside of the Disneyland and California Adventure parks. The all-you-can-eat breakfast buffet featuring Mickey waffles, made-to-order omelettes, and more, is accompanied by visits from Chip 'n' Dale and several of their critter friends.

The standout perk of staying at the Grand Californian is the location itself. Primarily, it offers direct access to Disney California Adventure park. Nowhere else in the world, aside from Tokyo DisneySea Hotel MiraCosta, does Disney offer a hotel-to-park entry quite like this. The proprietary entrance drops you right in the heart of California Adventure near Grizzly River Rapids. With shorter than average security and entry lines, it makes entering the park for hotel guests a breeze.



A look inside one of the rooms at Grand Californian. The hotel-wide renovation gave the rooms a fresh take on both decor and accessibility.



Not only does this hotel offer quick access to California Adventure, but it's the closest hotel on property for walking access to Disneyland Park; it's even closer than the Disneyland Hotel itself.

Convenience aside, the immersive nature of the Grand Californian feels like you never leave the Disneyland Resort experience. Each room features a balcony or patio, with preferred viewing options that overlook the California Adventure park or the Downtown Disney shopping district. Even time spent inside the room can keep guests connected to what the resort has to offer.

The rooms themselves feature several upgrades to provide an even better, more enjoyable stay. The spacious double rooms feature queen-sized beds with an additional seating area and enough outlets and USB ports to keep even the most tech-savvy family fully charged. Taking a cue from the Disney Cruise Line, the beds have been raised to offer plenty of under-bed storage for luggage and souvenirs to keep clutter to a minimum. The décor itself creates a warm, inviting atmosphere with wooden inlays featuring a tree motif with Chip 'n' Dale and countertops forged from recycled items like wine bottles. Gorgeous his and her sinks are topped with an oversized, ring-lit vanity mirror leading into the separated bathroom with a rainfall shower. Complete with a mini fridge and Keurig machine in every room, guests are guaranteed an extremely comfortable stay.

For an even more elevated vacation, the concierge, or club level rooms provide guests with extra amenities to make their visit even more magical. Check-in begins privately on the sixth floor where a cast member will be assigned to each party. They are available for assistance throughout a guest's stay, such as reservations, and ultimately offer a more personalized vacation experience. Club level includes additional amenities such as turndown service and in-room upgrades, but the pinnacle of this sought-after floor is access to the Veranda.

Exclusive for guests staying on the club level, the airy and sky-lighted Veranda is a bustling lounge area offering premium, and complimentary, food and drink throughout the day. Lunch selections feature upscale items like pineapple

spa water, ham and brie fig sandwiches and chocolate-dipped madeleine cookies with a comprehensive selection of California wines and beer. The renovation of this particular space opens up the balcony to include bar-style seating, perfect for enjoying the Disneyland fireworks. The nighttime show's music is also pumped into the space, providing an even better viewing experience.

As most of the hotel's rooms are non-club level, there are several amenities all guests can take advantage of. The newly remodeled, 24-hour Eureka Fitness Room has been decked out with state-of-the-art equipment like the latest treadmills and ellipticals, but also with more uncommon machines like a rowing machine and Life Fitness SYNRGY360 to add variety to any workout. The hotel is also offering a brand new service for guests to sign-up for complimentary classes such as a morning stretch and yoga, in addition to the already popular morning two-mile power walks.

If swimming or relaxing poolside is more appealing, guests will find three swimming pools and two hot tubs. There's a 90-foot-long tree trunk slide in the Redwood pool, and families can opt for one of six available cabana suites along the quieter Mariposa and Fountain pools. The now larger cabanas can accommodate a six- or seven-member group and feature plush seating, a large TV, and some included water and snacks. A digital hub allows guests to order menu items, charge their electronic devices and call the dedicated cast member included with their cabana rental.

For guests seeking tranquil pampering or perhaps end their vacation on a more relaxed note, the Mandara Spa provides a wide array of services. From



The fine dining restaurant Napa Rose features award-winning California cuisine and rare wines.

## DISNEY'S GRAND CALIFORNIAN HOTEL & SPA

**Location:** 1600 S. Disneyland Drive  
Anaheim, Disneyland Resort

**Prices:** Standard Room:  
\$417 to \$797 per night

**Phone:** (714) 635-2300

**Website:** Disneyland.com

manicures and waxing to facial therapy and complete massage packages, this full service location immerses guests in the cultures of Asia, India, the Mediterranean and the New World to offer experiences that are as luxurious as they are therapeutic.

Staying on property for any Disney vacation is a part of the magical experience and the Grand Californian Hotel and Spa is without exception. With premiere amenities, convenient location, award-winning restaurants and friendly staff, guests can anticipate their stay as a shining highlight of their visit to the Disneyland Resort.





The Edison burger is one of the menu highlights, featuring the chef's original meat blend, cloth-bound cheddar, his special sauce — plus great fries.

The grand look of The Edison highlights the two-story building and the amazing amount of gothic industrial theming, which includes a wealth of genuine period artifacts.



By Susan and Simon Veness

## Head for a Dining Adventure at The Edison

**D**isney Springs is almost unrecognizable from its former life as Downtown Disney, with a dazzling new look, style and ambience. So it makes sense that one of its newest additions is possibly the most daring, stylish and downright entertaining of them all.

Step forward The Edison, a two-story triumph of gothic industrial architecture, packed full of eye-catching design, period charm – and truly delicious food and beverage options.

Disney purists will know this as the site of the late, lamented Adventurers Club, that beacon of creativity at the heart of the old Pleasure Island, but they should be encouraged by the fact the newcomer definitely hints at the Club's former glories, while several elements of the original infrastructure remain in place.

This has been one of the longest “forthcoming” productions in the whole of Disney Springs, but it has been worth the wait, especially as it forms part of an extensive dining complex with the new Maria & Enzo's Ristorante, Pizza Ponte and Enzo's Hideaway, which have all been delightfully interconnected by repurposing the old tunnels and backstage areas of Pleasure Island.

The Edison is the entertainment hub of this mini “empire” (which all comes with its own backstory of home-spun entrepreneurial spirit, courtesy of Maria and Enzo), building on the design ethos of the original Edison nightclub/restaurant in Los Angeles, which is a genuine power plant conversion.

Owner-designer Andrew Meieran has a passion for restoring historic buildings,

hence his Disney collaboration fully evokes the early 20th century period it mimics, from the music to the dress style and the black-and-white movie clips to the genuine artifacts – all from Meieran's private collection – that fill both floors with oodles of classic charm. Even the restrooms resonate with an almost Steampunk Art Nouveau motif that is quite unique.

That isn't to say there aren't lots of contemporary touches once you wander inside. There are plenty, notably in the late night entertainment, which includes an aerialist, juggler, acrobat and the Flapper-style dancers, the Pearls, but the overall vibe is so heavily retro that it's an absolute blast.

The Patina Restaurant Group – who also worked with Disney on Via Napoli



PHOTO BY THE EDISON

The interior design features beautiful wall art and authentic styling, to ensure the whole ambience fits the period.

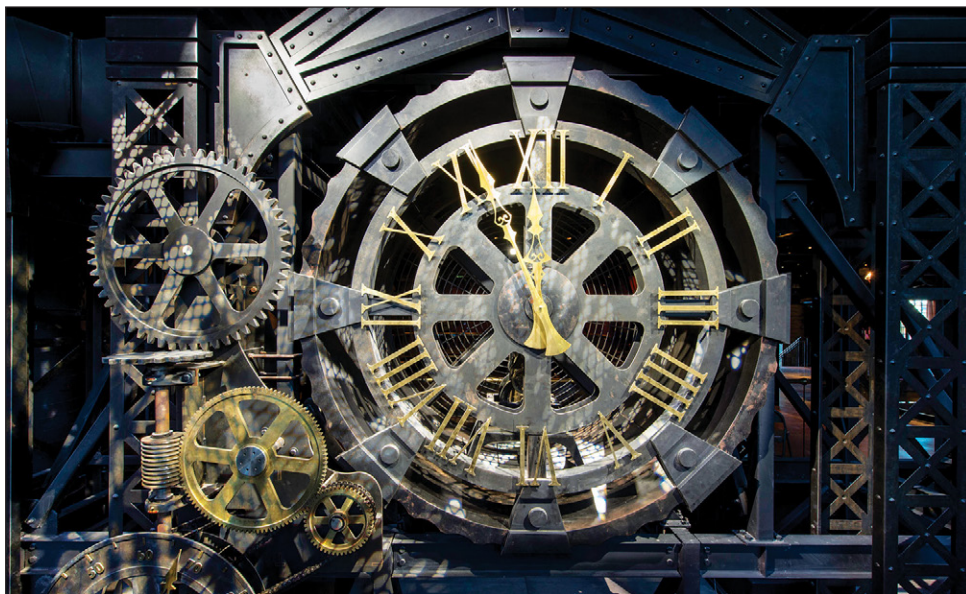


PHOTO BY THE EDISON

The huge Steampunk-style clock greets guests inside the main entrance, setting the scene for the adventure within.





The eye-catching interior features an open, wrought-iron staircase with a central steel platform displaying a large steam engine.



The Edison's external look is equally smart, with its industrial nature featuring an iconic chimney.

Edison, and worked to faithfully recreate that look and feel in Florida. The immersive spaces, live performances, and quality of entertainment were all extremely important to the vision.

"In terms of new features, we have outdoor waterfront seating on Lake Buena Vista, and we've enhanced the culinary offerings with additional dishes. The Edison is an exuberant place to visit, and we hope guests enjoy the immersive entertainment with live musicians, dancers and aerialists, in addition to exceptional cocktails and food."

Ah, the cocktails. Just to start with, the drinks portion of the menu – or, as they call it, The Catalogue of Parts – outweighs the food section by around four to one. There is a lot of focus on beer, wine and cocktails. With four different bars, three lounge areas and two outdoor patios, this place takes its drinking seriously — much as the old Adventurers Club did.

"This has one of the largest inventories of liquor in Walt Disney World," we were told. "We take craft cocktails to another level, and keep things in period by having a lot of absinthe-based offer-

ings. Even some of our cocktails have storylines, like the Samantha Sterling, which is a nod to the Adventurers Club." (Samantha was one of the Club's regular characters, an explorer and cabaret singer).

It's clear this is no idle boast. The Edison clearly knows what a good cocktail should taste like, and each one comes with its own hand-crafted style to reflect the period. We tried The Edison – a four-element classic, led by Woodford Reserve bourbon, bolstered by a smooth tot of pear brandy, and finished with lemon and honey that unfold in sequence – and, of course, the Samantha Sterling, Grey Goose vodka and Lillet Rose, with a strong watermelon component and an aromatic finish from the cinnamon cordial.

We would happily try either one again, especially as they paired extremely well with our food, but we also want to investigate the City Of Light (Tanqueray gin, bitters, lime, sugar and cucumber soda) and Electric Mule, which adds strawberry and lemongrass cordial to the usual Mule mix. Having said that, with



two full pages of cocktail choices, we could easily change our minds!

If it sounds like this is largely a bar environment, that would be overlooking an extremely tempting array of food that is great for lunch and extended in the evening with a more exotic assortment of entrees, including a 28-day dry-aged prime rib, New York strip steak, salmon, crab cake and half a dozen sides. The basic menu is built around a line-up of signature burgers, sandwiches and salads, plus a “Shares & Nibbles” selection that is ideal for small-plate dining.

Well-traveled executive chef PJ Finneran’s burger blend is a succulent mix of sirloin, short rib and brisket, and the patty is topped with Cabot cloth-bound cheddar, onion rings, smoked bacon, tangy housemade pickles, lettuce, tomato and his special sauce, accompanied by thick-cut fries dusted in a seasoning blend that are almost worth coming in for on their own.

We can heartily vouch for the Gem Lettuce Salad, which is easily enough for an entrée, while The Edison’s Organic Tomato Soup and Goopy Grilled Cheese takes a staple combo and makes them borderline gourmet.

Hawkers’ Box of Balls (lamb meatballs with mint, Harissa, which is a roasted red pepper paste, and strained yogurt) are an ideal sharing appetizer, served in inimitable style in their own box. But pride of place has to go to the DB Clothesline Candied Bacon, a truly inspired presentation of four meaty, black-peppered strips suspended over dishes of fruit relish and sour pickles.

The deep smokiness was a total palate-pleaser and the maple-candy finish is one of those textured flavors that can only officially be described as “ridiculously yummy” (copyright, Susan and Simon, 2018). In all seriousness, it is rare for a dish to look this good, to have such original presentation, to smell divine and to taste even better.

Normally, we’d raise an eyebrow at more than \$3 per slice for bacon, but in this instance, we will make an exception, and just say, try it! Even the poles that suspend the bacon are charred to go with the restaurant’s industrial look, which has to make this one of the most highly themed dishes in Disney Springs.



Great to look at, but even better on the tastebuds - that’s the full-flavored DB Clothesline Candied Bacon appetizer, left, and the smooth-as-silk Black Cherry Cream milkshake, both of which are must-try menu items.



There are major desserts too, and these are not to be trifled with (copyright, Susan & Simon, 1921). The Bittersweet Chocolate Mile High Cake would usually be our go-to choice in this area, or the fun Lollipop Tree for pure eye appeal (patented cheesecake pops with bubblegum whipped cream), but our recommendation here can, again, be only one thing.

Black Cherry Cream is a humble name for something that really ought to be called the most awesome concoction of milkshake lusciousness in the cosmos. This monster shake features vanilla gelato, sour cherries and gummi poppers, topped with a pixy stix, rainbow pop, whipped cream and Nerds. It’s easily enough for two and may well last until dinner by the time you get to the bottom of the huge laboratory beaker it is served in. We’re told there is also a Rocky Road version ready to hit the menu, sorry, Catalogue of Parts, and we simply can’t wait to try that, too.

There will also be more deliciousness to come from The Edison in the future, as a forthcoming Bartenders Midnight Breakfast menu will include the likes of Streusel Brioche Toast and Spicy Chicken and Waffle. We will definitely be back.



Another great choice off the Shares & Nibbles selection is the highly original Hawk’s Box of Balls.

PHOTOS BY VENESS TRAVEL MEDIA

## THE EDISON

<b>Location:</b>	Disney Springs, The Landing
<b>Price Range</b>	
<b>Appetizers:</b>	\$12 to \$17
<b>Entrees:</b>	\$20 to \$38
<b>Sides:</b>	\$9 or \$10
<b>Desserts:</b>	\$9 to \$18
<b>Phone:</b>	407-560-WATT (9288)
<b>Online:</b>	theedisonfla.com
<b>Hours:</b>	11:30 a.m. to 1 a.m. (2 a.m. Thursday through Saturday); 21 and up only after 10 p.m.

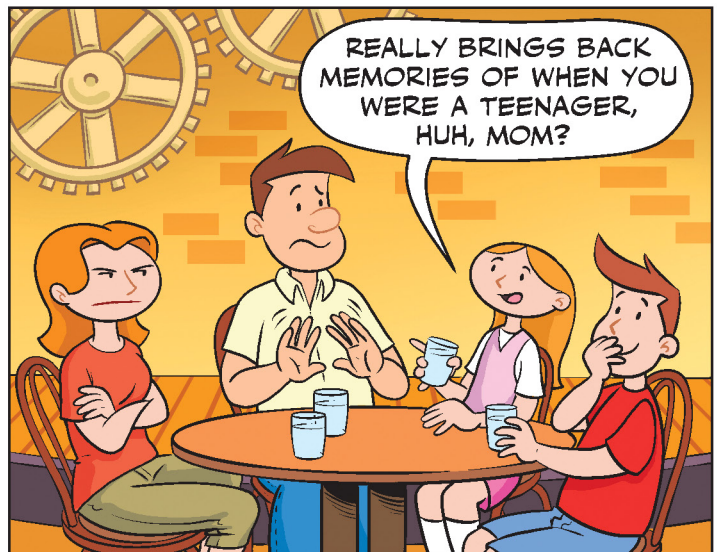
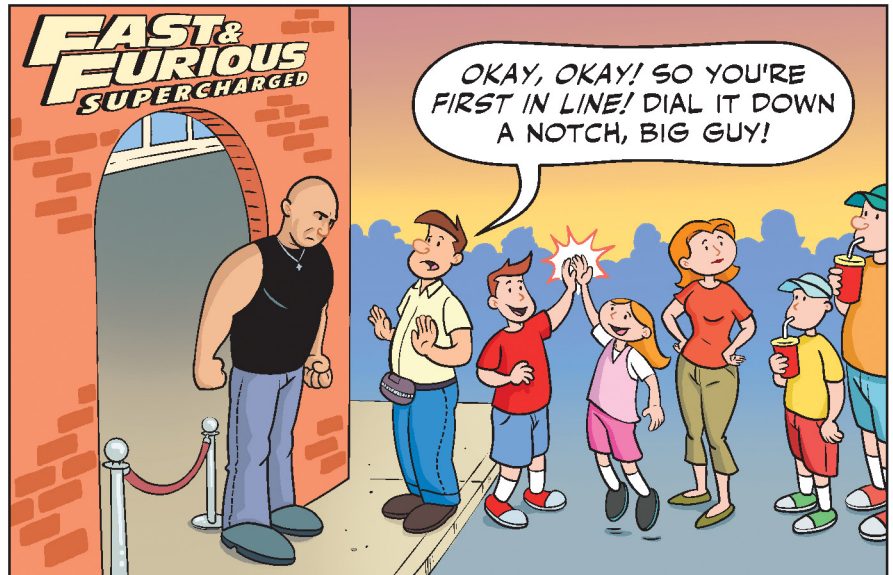
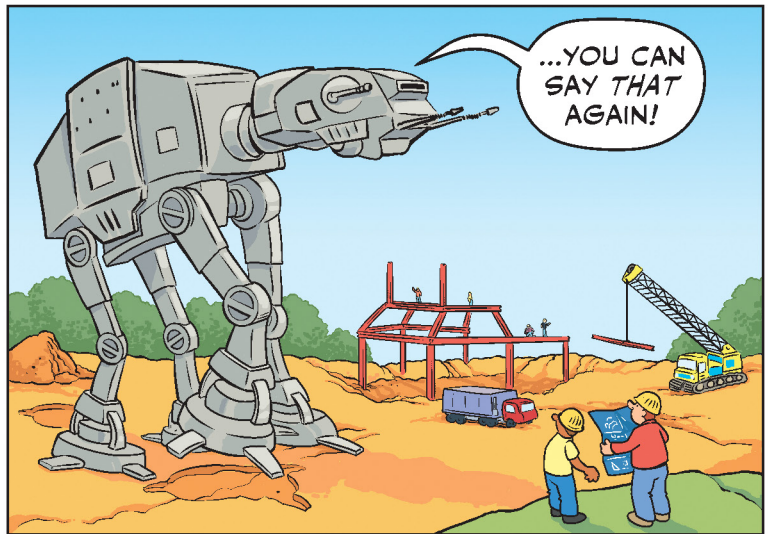
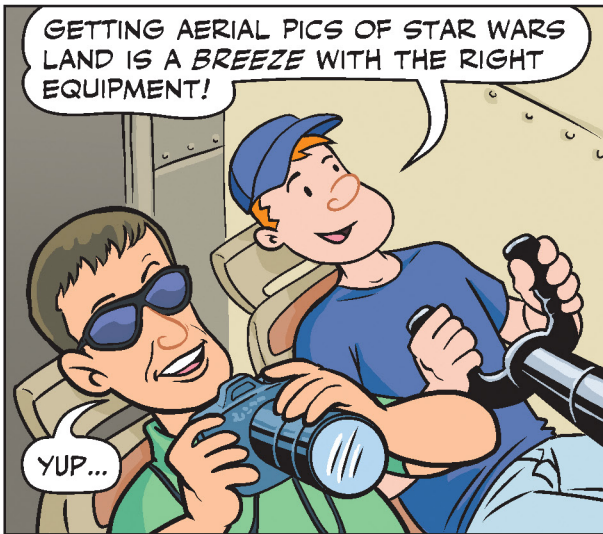
They accept the Disney Dining Plan and offer annual passholder and Tables in Wonderland discounts.





# AMUSEMENT PARK

By Vince Dorse, Created by Pat N. Lewis & John Green







# SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Can you spot the 10 differences in these two photos?

**W**e have a date! Toy Story Land at Disney's Hollywood Studios is officially opening on June 30! This is a look at one of two brand new rides in the new area, the Slinky Dog Dash roller coaster.



1. There are now two red lightbulbs on the string of lights. 2. There is an another red block sitting on top of the other red block (top left side of photo). 3. The blue block on the middle right side of photo has changed to orange. 4. The Slinky Dog's pupils are larger. 5. The orange brim on Jessie's hat is now blue. 6. There are now two white lightbulbs on the string of lights. 7. The tan cylinder block has vanished (left middle of photo). 8. An orange pyramid block has appeared on top of the green block (middle of photo). 9. The fringe from Jessie's left glove is gone. 10. There is an extra orange support on the track (right bottom side of photo).





# THE RUMOR QUEUE

DuckTales Attraction at Epcot? 'Stranger Things' at Halloween Horror Nights?

By Fowl Owlerson

**H**ello, Attractions readers! Welcome to another edition of "The Rumor Queue"! It's spring! The weather is warming up and we've got rumors for you to parse through. So crank up that A/C, sit down and join us.



## Universal Orlando Resort and Universal Hollywood

Work is ramping up on Universal Orlando's third park. We've heard Super Nintendo World's Mario Kart ride, Donkey Kong roller coaster and Mushroom Kingdom hub have shifted over to this new park. KidZone may instead feature Pokémon and perhaps even the previously planned Kirby play area. This third park is rumored to feature Tolkien's Middle-earth, SpongeBob SquarePants and How to Train Your Dragon. Another rumor we've heard intermittently is that Universal is interested in licensing shows from Cartoon Network, such as "Adventure Time" and "Regular Show", for use in their parks. Whether this would be for the new third park or the current landscape is of course to be determined.

Halloween Horror Nights planning is underway. We've heard haunted houses

based on "Stranger Things", Blumhouse's "Halloween" (2018), "Trick 'r Treat", John Carpenter's "The Thing", and Stephen King's "It" will be at Universal Studios Hollywood and in Orlando. "American Horror Story" is rumored to return to both coasts, but with mazes based on different seasons. We've also heard of a haunted house based on Wes Craven's "A Nightmare on Elm Street" for the Orlando event.

## Walt Disney World and Disneyland

Part of Epcot's renovations are rumored to include adding foliage and relevant characters in the entrance of each pavilion. For example, France would feature characters from "Ratatouille". Rumors continue to circulate about the removal of Innoventions, as well as an overhaul of Spaceship Earth.

Disney California Adventure will be getting a new Spider-Man attraction and patents filed by Disney are rumored to be for this experience. From what we can tell, the ride vehicle will give guests the feeling of web-slinging with more immersive movements than The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man in Universal's Islands of Adventure. This is purely speculation, but we'd be surprised if actor

Tom Holland didn't reprise his role for the new attraction.

Agent P's World Showcase Adventure at Epcot is rumored to be on the chopping block. Its replacement is rumored to be a new adventure featuring DuckTales. With the new series being broadcast and its large roster of characters, it'd be a fitting addition to Epcot.

## Busch Gardens Tampa

Busch Gardens is rumored to be planning on constructing its own hotel. We've also heard the rumor that Bolliger & Mabillard will be commissioned to design and construct the roller coaster that'll replace the now-closed Gwazi. Rumors overall have moved at a glacial pace. Perhaps we'll have more to report later in the year.

## DISCLAIMER

*The thoughts expressed here are not purporting as fact and should be viewed as hearsay until officially confirmed or denied by the companies mentioned.*

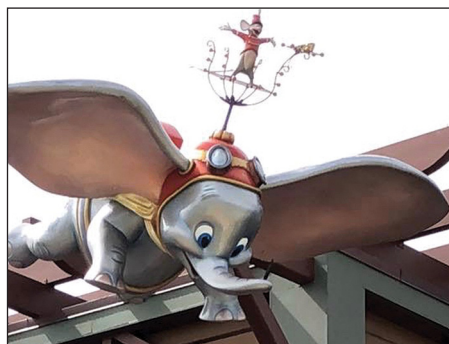
Have a rumor, comment, or question? Send them our way at [info@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:info@attractionsmagazine.com). You can also strike up a conversation with yours truly on Twitter @fowlowlerson.



# MYSTERY PHOTO

## WIN A PRIZE!

Tell us which building you can see Dumbo above at Walt Disney World. To enter, e-mail your answer, along with your name and mailing address to [mystery@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:mystery@attractionsmagazine.com).



## LAST ISSUE'S MYSTERY PHOTO ANSWER

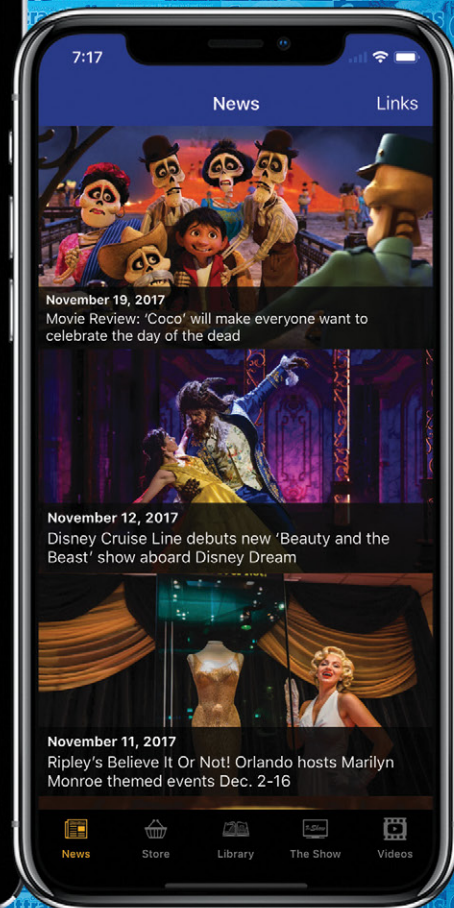
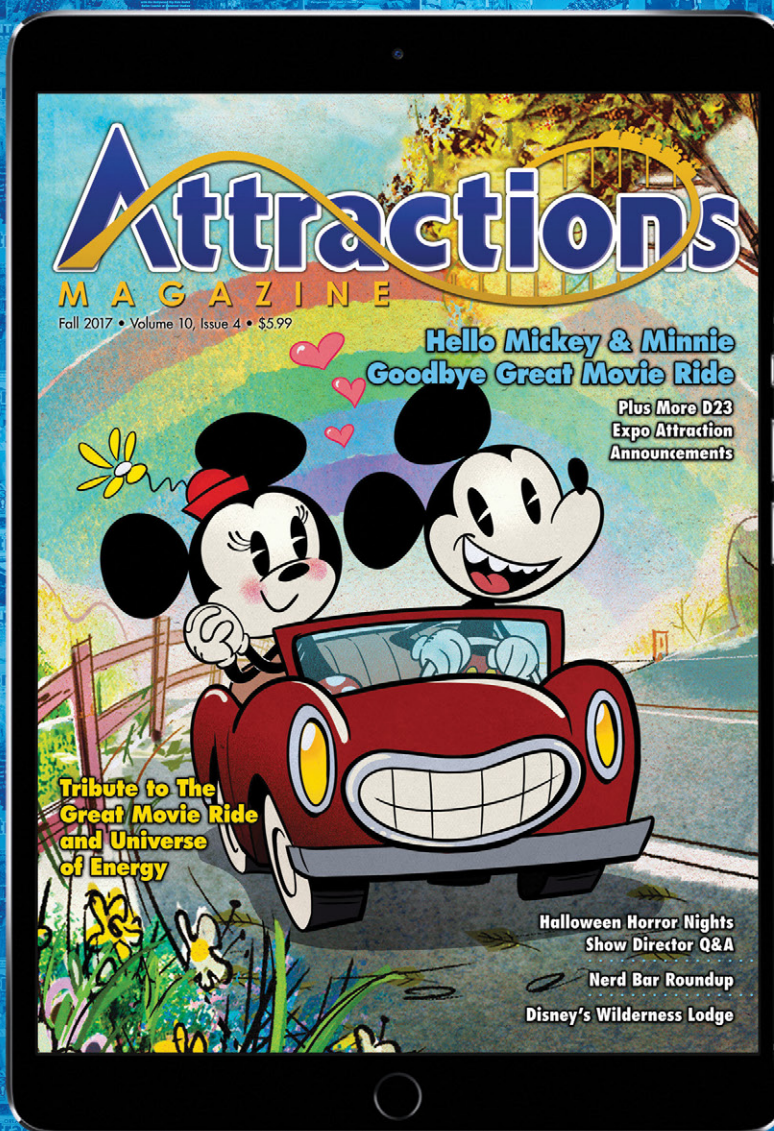
Congratulations to Greg Lonquist from Henderson, Nevada. He recognized the "circle" as a chandelier in The Leaky Cauldron restaurant in The Wizarding World of Harry Potter: Diagon Alley at Universal Studios Florida.



The deadline for entries is May 10, 2018. One answer allowed per person, per issue. Include your name and mailing address with your answer. Everyone who submits the correct location will go into a drawing. One person, randomly selected from all the correct entries, will win a prize. We reserve the right to publish the name, city and state of those entering. One winner per household allowed per year.



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# OUT OF THE LOOP

Attractions News from Outside the Orlando Area

By Andy Guinigundo



## Six Flags Over Texas to Open Harley Quinn Spinsanity .....

**Arlington, Texas** – Harley Quinn Spinsanity will be the first ride of its type to open in the Western Hemisphere. The ride features three independently rotating boxes, allowing for movement in three axes simultaneously. Riders rotate as high as 70 feet in the air while sitting in floorless seats. The ride is described as chaotic and unpredictable, just like DC Comics' Harley Quinn. Visually, the ride is sure to thrill spectators from various points in the park. The ride joins the DC Comics-themed rides within the Gotham City area of the park. The ride is expected to open this spring.

## Legoland Billund Turns 50 .....

**Billund, Denmark** – It's hard to believe Legoland Billund is turning 50 years old when the stateside Legoland resorts are all under 20 years old. In fact, Legoland New York won't

open until 2020. Legoland Billund Resort, the first Legoland in the world, opened on June 7, 1968. Legoland Billund has announced several plans to celebrate. The entrance to the park will be upgraded with color changes and a big red Lego dinosaur. A fan-favorite land within the park, Legoredo, will be renovated. The classic Lego Canoe attraction will be completely overhauled. The marquee addition will be a

new junior coaster, "Den Flyvende Ørn", which means The Flying Eagle. Finally, in June, along with the help of park guests, the resort will attempt to break the world record for tallest Lego tower. The resort season opening is planned for March 24.

## Downtown Disney to be Reimagined .....

**Anaheim, Calif.** – While Walt Disney World in Florida dropped the name "Downtown Disney" several years ago in favor of Disney Springs, out on the West Coast, the Downtown Disney moniker remains. The resort is quite compact. Throughout 2018, new venues will open. World of Disney, the flagship store for all things Disney, promises a "new, dynamic, and distinctly Disney" retail environment. Specifics have not been announced, but the renovations will be completed in phases with the store remaining open during that time. California craft brewery Ballast Point will open its first Orange County location and it will be the area's first on-site brewery. They will serve California cuisine and exclusive, limited-edition beers, in addition to their flagship beers like Sculpin IPA. Other additions this year include Splitsville Luxury Lanes, Disney Home, an upgrade to Naples Ristorante e Pizzeria and Black Tap Craft Burgers & Beer.







Disney has also announced a new hotel for Downtown Disney further in the future.

### **Magic Mountain to Open Largest Pendulum Ride**

**Valencia, Calif.** – Six Flags Magic Mountain touts itself as the “Thrill Capital of the World”. It’s doing more to bolster that reputation by opening the world’s largest pendulum ride as the centerpiece of the newly re-themed Boardwalk area. CraZanity will tower 17 stories, swinging riders back and forth at 75 mph, all while rotating counterclockwise. The Boardwalk area will also feature enhanced bumper cars, renovated attractions, games, dining and shopping. The ride will open soon. Speaking of opening, the park is now open 365 days a year.



### **SeaWorld to Debut Electric Eel Coaster**

**San Diego, Calif.** – SeaWorld San Diego will open San Diego’s tallest and fastest roller coaster this summer. The Electric Eel will join Journey to Atlantis and Manta as the third coaster or coaster-like experience at the park. Electric Eel will literally top all of them with a maximum height of nearly 150 feet. This multi-launching steel coaster will hit its max speed of over 60 mph in only a few seconds. Some ride features will include a heartline roll and a twisting loop. Riders will get a unique, upside-down view of Mission Bay. The ride will be complemented by a live moray eel habitat that is already in place. Electric Eel



will be the latest addition to the Ocean Explorer realm that opened last summer

as the park’s largest expansion ever. The ride is expected to open this summer.





## Disney Cruise

**W**hen you go on a Disney Cruise, expect to run into royalty at various times. Usually, four or more princesses will line up to meet guests in the atrium. Here's a look at Cinderella during a recent appearance on the Disney Dream, and a look down at her twirling with a young fan in a smaller version of her dress.





From print, to your television.

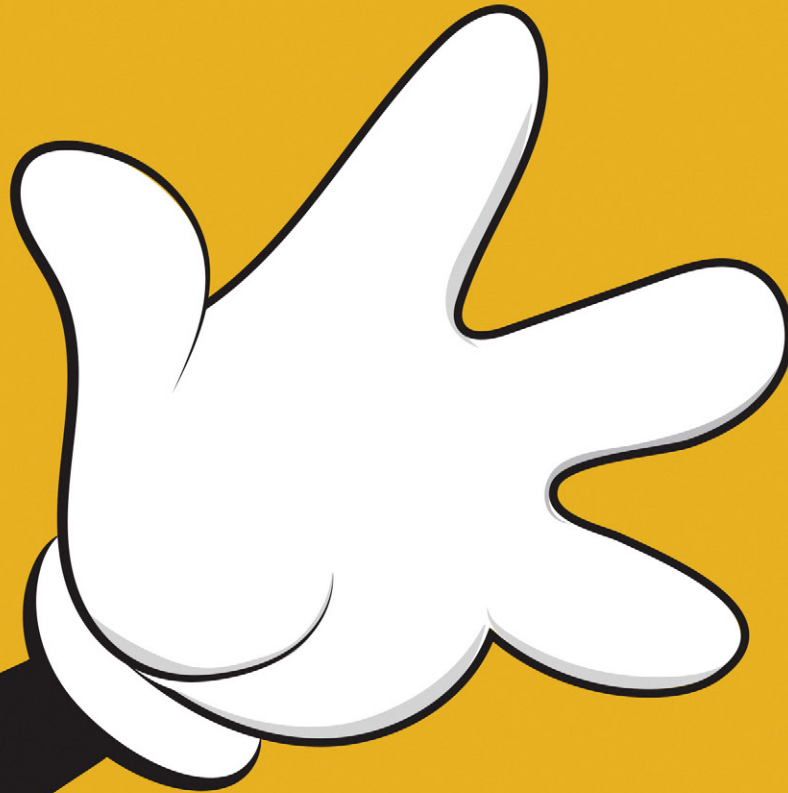


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